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THE WORKS

OF THE

RIGHT REVEREND JOSEPH HALL, D.D.

BISHOP OF EXETER AND AFTERWARDS OF NORWICH.

A NEW EDITION,

REVISED AND CORRECTED, WITH SOME ADDITIONS,

BY

PHILIP WYNTER, D.D.

PRESIDENT OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.

VOL. VII.

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HARVARD UNIVERSITY

THE BALM OF GILEAD;

OR,

COMFORTS FOR THE DISTRESSED,

BOTH MORAL AND DIVINE.

TO ALL

THE DISTRESSED MEMBERS

OF

JESUS CHRIST, WHERESOEVER:

WHOSE SOULS ARE WOUNDED WITH THE PRESENT SENSE OF THEIR SINS, OR OF THEIR AFFLICTIONS, OR WITH THE FEARS OF DEATH AND JUDGMENT:

The author humbly recommends this sovereign balm, which God hath been pleased to put into his hands for their benefit; earnestly exhorting them to apply it carefully to their several sores, together with their faithful prayers to God for a blessing upon the use thereof: not doubting, but, through God's mercy, they shall find thereby a sensible ease and comfort to their souls, which shall be helped on by the fervent devotions of the unworthiest servant of God and his Church.

J. H. B. N.

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The universal receipt for all maladies.

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THE BALM OF GILEAD:

OR

THE COMFORTER.

COMFORTS FOR THE SICK BED.

The Preface.

WHAT should we do in this vale of tears but bemoan each other's miseries? every man hath his load; and well is he whose burden is so easy that he may help his neighbours. Hear me, my son. My age hath waded through a world of sorrows. *The Angel that hath hitherto redeemed my soul from all evil,* (Gen. xlviii. 16,) and hath led me within few paces of the shore, offers to lend me his hand to guide thee in this dangerous ford, wherein every error is death. Let us follow him with an humble confidence, and be safe in the view and pity of the woful miscarriages of others.

SECTION I.—*Aggravation of the misery of sickness.*

Thou art now cast upon the bed of sickness, *roaring out all the day long* for the extremity of thy pain, Ps. xxxii. 3; measuring the slow hours not by minutes, but by groans. Thy *soul* is *weary of* thy *life,* (Job x. 1,) through the intolerable *anguish of* thy *spirit,* Job vii. 11. Of all earthly afflictions this is the sorest. Job himself, after the sudden and astonishing news of the loss of his goods and children, could yet bear up and bless the God that gives and takes, Job i. 21; but when his body was tormented, and was made one boil; now, his patience is retched so far, as to curse (not his God, but) his nativity, Job iii. 3. The great king, questioning with his cupbearer Nehemiah, can say, *Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick?* Neh. ii. 2; as implying that the sick man, of all other, hath just cause to be dejected. Worldly crosses are aloof off from us, sickness is in our bosom; those touch ours only, these, ourselves; here the whole man suffers; what could the body feel without the soul that animates it? How can the soul which makes the body sensible choose but

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be most affected with that pain whereof it gives sense to the body? Both partners have enough to do to encounter so fierce an enemy. The sharper assault requires the more powerful resistance. Recollect thyself, my son, and call up all the powers of thy soul to grapple with so violent an enemy.

SECT. II.—1. *Comfort.—The freedom of the soul.*

Thy body is by a sore disease confined to thy bed:—I should be sorry to say thou thyself wert so. Thy soul, which is thyself, is, I hope, elsewhere. That, however it is content to take a share in thy sufferings, soars above to the heaven of heavens; and is prostrate before the throne of grace, suing for mercy and forgiveness; beholding the face of thy glorious Mediator interceding for thee.

Woe were it to us if our souls were coffined up in our bosoms, so as they could not stir abroad, nor go any farther than they are carried, like some snail or tortoise that cannot move out of the shell. Blessed be God, he hath given us active spirits, that can bestir themselves while our bodies lie still; that can be so quick and nimble in their motions, as that they can pass from earth to heaven, ere our bodies can turn to the other side.

And how much shall we be wanting to ourselves, if we do not make use of this spiritual agility; sending up these spirits of ours from this dull clay of our bodies to those regions of blessedness, that they may thence fetch comfort to alleviate the sorrows of their heavy partners!

Thus do thou, my son, employ the better part; no pains of the worse can make thee miserable. That spiritual part of thine shall ere long be in bliss, while this earthen piece shall lie rotting in the grave. Why shouldst thou not, even now before thy separation, improve all the powers of it to thy present advantage? Let that still behold the face of thy God in glory, while thy bodily eyes look upon those friends at thy bedside which may pity thee, but cannot help thee.

SECT. III.—2. *Comfort.—From the Author of sickness, and the benefit of it.*

Thou art pained with sickness: Consider seriously, whence it is that thou thus smartest. *Affliction cometh not out of the dust,* Job v. 6. Couldst thou but hear the voice of thy disease, as well as thou feelest the stroke of it, it saith loud enough, *Am I come up hither without the Lord to torment thee? The Lord hath said*

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to me, Go up against this man, *and* afflict *him*, 2 Kings xviii. 25. Couldst thou see the hand that smites thee, thou couldst not but kiss it.

Why, man, it is thy good God, the Father of all mercies, that lays these stripes upon thee. He that made thee, he that bought thee at so dear a rate as his own blood, it is he that chastiseth thee; and canst thou think he will whip thee but for thy good? Thou art a father of children, and art acquainted with thine own bowels; didst thou ever take the rod into thy hand out of a pleasure that thou tookest in smiting that flesh which is derived from thine own loins? was it any ease to thee to make thy child smart and bleed? Didst thou not suffer more than thou inflictedst? Couldst thou not rather have been content to have redeemed those his stripes with thine own? Yet thou sawest good reason to lay on, and not to spare for his loud crying and many tears, Prov. xix. 18; and canst say, thou hadst not loved him if thou hadst not been so kindly severe? And if we that are evil know how to give loving and beneficial correction unto our children, how much more shall our Father which is in heaven know how to beat us to our advantage! so as we may sing under the rod with the blessed Psalmist, *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that of very faithfulness thou hast afflicted me*, Ps. cxix. 75.

Might the child be made arbiter of his own chastisement, do we think he would award himself so much as one lash? yet the wiser parent knows he shall wrong him, if he do not inflict more, as having learned of wise Solomon, *Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell*, Prov. xxiii. 14. "Love hath his strokes," saith Ambrose, "which are so much the sweeter by how much they are the harder set on [a]."

Dost thou not remember the message that the two sisters sent to our Saviour—*Lord, behold he whom thou lovest is sick?* John xi. 3. Were it so, that pain or sickness, or any other the executioners of divine justice, should be let loose upon thee to tyrannize over thee at pleasure, on purpose to render thee perfectly miserable, there were just reason for thy utter disheartening; now they are stinted, and go under commission; neither can they be allowed to have any other limits than thy own advantage.

Tell we whether thou hadst rather be good or be healthful:

[a] [Serm. lxxxiv. Paris 1586. tom. iv. p. 900.]

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I know thou wouldst be both, and thinkest thou mayest well be so. Who is so little in his own favour as to imagine he can be the worse for faring well? But he that made thee looks farther into thee than thine own eyes can do; he sees thy vigour is turning wanton, and that if thy body be not sick, thy soul will: if he, therefore, find it fit to take down thy worse part a little, for the preventing of a mortal danger to the better, what cause hast thou to complain, yea, rather not to be thankful? When thou hast felt thy body in a distemper of fulness, thou hast gone to sea on purpose to make thyself sick, yet thou knewest that turning of thy head and stomach would be more painful to thee than thy former indisposition; why should not thine all-wise Creator take liberty to cure thee with an afflictious remedy?

SECT. IV.—3. *Comfort. From the vicissitudes of health.*

Thou art now sick: wert thou not before a long time healthful? Canst thou not be content to take thy turns? Job ii. 10. If thou hadst not more days of health than hours of sickness, how canst thou think thou hadst cause to repine? Had the Divine Wisdom thought fit to mitigate thy many days' pain with the ease of one hour, it had been well worthy of thy thanks; but now that it hath beforehand requited thy few painful hours with years of perfect health, how unthankfully dost thou grudge at the condition!

It was a foul mistake, if thou didst not from all earthly things expect a vicissitude; they cannot have their being without a change. As well may day be without a succession of night, and life without death, as a mortal body without fits of distemper.

And how much better are these momentary changes than that last change of a misery unchangeable! It was a woful word that father Abraham said to the damned glutton: *Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented,* Luke xvi. 25. O happy stripes wherewith we are chastened of the Lord, that *we may not be condemned with the world,* 1 Cor. xi. 32. O welcome fevers, that may quit my soul from everlasting burnings!

SECT. V.—4. *Comfort.—Sickness better than sinful health.*

Thou complainest of sickness: I have known those that have bestowed tears upon their too much health, sadly bemoaning the

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fear and danger of God's disfavour, for that they ailed nothing; and our Bromiard[b] tells us of a devout man in his time that bewailed his continued welfare as no small affliction, whom, soon after, God fitted with pain enough. The poor man joyed in the change, and held his sickness a mercy; neither indeed was it otherwise intended by Him that sent it. Why are we too much dejected with that which others complain to want? Why should we find that so tedious to us which others have wished?

There have been medicinal agues which the wise physician hath cast his patient into for the cure of a worse distemper. A secure and lawless health, however nature takes it, is the most dangerous indisposition of the soul; if that may be healed by some few bodily pangs, the advantage is unspeakable.

Look upon some vigorous gallant, that, in the height of his spirit and the heat of his blood, eagerly pursues his carnal delights, as thinking of no heaven, but the free delectation of his sense, and compare thy present estate with his. Here thou liest, groaning and sighing and panting, and shifting thy weary sides, complaining of the heavy pace of thy tedious hours, while he is frolicking with his jocund companions, carousing his large healths, sporting himself with his wanton mistress, and bathing himself in all sensual pleasures, and tell me whether of the two thou thinkest in the happier condition. Surely if thou be not shrunk into nothing but mere sense, if thou hast not cast off all thoughts of another world, thou shalt pity the misery of that godless jollity, and gratulate to thyself the advantage of thine humble and faithful suffering, as that which shall at last make thee an abundant amends by yielding thee *the peaceable fruit of righteousness*, Heb. xii. 11.

SECT. VI.—5. *Comfort.—The greater sufferings of holier men, and the resolutions of heathens.*

Thy pain is grievous: I apprehend it such, and pity thee with all my soul. But let me tell thee, it is not such but that holier men have suffered more.

Dost thou not hear the great precedent of patience crying out from his dunghill, *O that my grief were throughly weighed, and my calamities laid in the balance together! for now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea; therefore my words are*

[b] Brom. Sum. V. Infirmitas. [Art. viii. dixit, "non cogitas de me quod non castigas me," &c.]

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swallowed up. For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirits: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me, Job vi. 2, 3, 4.

Dost thou not hear the man after God's own heart speak of *the voice of his roaring?* Ps. xxii. 1. Dost thou not see him that shrunk not from the bear, the lion, the giant, *drenching his bed with his tears?* Ps. vi. 6.

Dost thou not hear the faithful crying out, *I am the man that hath suffered affliction by the rod of his wrath, &c. Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand against me all the day. My flesh and skin hath he made old: he hath broken my bones?* Lam. iii. 1, 3, 4.

Might I not easily show thee the prophets, apostles, martyrs, the great favourites of Heaven, some on the gridirons, others in boiling caldrons; some on the spits, others under the saws; some in the flames, others crashed with the teeth of wild beasts; some on the racks, others in fiery furnaces; most of them in such torments, as in comparison whereof thy pains are but sports?

Yea, what speak I of these mortal, and at the best, sinful men, when thou mayest see the Son of God, the Lord of life, the King of glory, *God blessed for ever,* sweating drops of blood in his dreadful agony, and mayest hear him cry upon the tree of shame and curse, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

Alas, what are we capable to suffer in proportion of these tortures? Who are we, that we should think much to share with the best of God's saints, yea, with the dear and eternal Son of his love, our ever-blessed Redeemer? Had not God found this the way to their heaven, they had not trod so deep in blood; why do we grudge to wet our feet where they waded?

Yea, if from these holy ones thou shalt turn thine eyes to some mere pagans, let me show thee the man whom we are wont to account infamous for voluptuousness, Epicurus the philosopher, who, on his dying day, when he lay extremely tormented with the stone in the bladder, and a tearing cholic in his bowels, as it were gasping for life, yet even then, writing to his Idomenius, can, out of the strength of his resolutions, profess his cheerfulness, and can style even that day blessed. It was the same mouth that could boast, that if he were frying in the brazen bull of Phalaris, he could there find contentment. What should I tell thee of a Mucius Scævola, who, in a glorious revenge, voluntarily burns off his own right hand, not without the envy and pity of

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his enemies? or of a Regulus, that, after so high a provocation, offers himself to the worst of the merciless fury of his tormentors? "Why shouldst thou think it strange," saith wise Seneca, "that some men should be well pleased to be scorched, to be wounded, to be racked, to be killed? Frugality is a pain to the riotous, labour is a punishment to the lazy, continence is a misery to the wanton, study is a torture to the slothful. All these things are not in their own nature difficult, but we are feeble and false-hearted."

Shall these pagans attain to this height of magnanimity out of the bravery of their manly resolutions, and shall we Christians droop and pule under gentler sufferings, while we profess to have, moreover, the advantage of faith to uphold and cheer us? Poor heathen souls! they never heard of any gracious engagements of a merciful God to stand by them and to comfort them; they never had met with those sweet messages from heaven, *Call upon me in the day of thy trouble, and thou shalt glorify me*, Psalm l. 15: *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*, Matt. xi. 28: *Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees; say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you*, Isa. xxxv. 3, 4. They had not the heart of a Job, to say, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, nor the eyes of a Stephen, to pierce the heaven, and to see their Saviour standing at the right hand of God, but merely tugged it out in the strength of their natural courage, heightened with a vainglorious ambition of the fame which they did believe would survive them; whereas we Christians know that we have a God, the Father of all mercies, to stand by us; a Redeemer, to deliver us: a Comforter, to strengthen and refresh us; sweet and unfailable promises, to sustain us; and, at last, a crown of eternal glory to recompense us.

SECT. VII.—6. *Comfort.—Our sufferings far below our deservings.*

Thou art pained with sickness: look not at what thou feelest, but at what thou hast deserved to feel. *Why doth the living man complain? man suffereth for his sin*, Lam. iii. 39. Alas, the wages of every sin is death, a double death, of body, of soul, temporal, eternal. Any thing below this is mercy. There is not

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the least of thy many thousand transgressions but hath merited the infinite wrath of a just God, and thereby more torments than thou art capable to undergo.

What dost thou complain of ease? Where thou owedst a thousand talents, thou art bidden to take thy bill, and sit down and write fifty, Luke xvi. 6: wilt thou not magnify the clemency of so favourable a creditor? Surely, were every twig wherewith thou smartest a scorpion, and every breath that thou sendest forth a flame, this were yet less than thy due. O the infinite goodness of our indulgent Father, that takes up with so gentle a correction.

Tell me, thou nice and delicate patient, if thou canst not bear these stripes, how wilt thou be able to endure those that are infinitely sorer? Alas! what are these to that hell which abides for the impatient? There are exquisite pains without mitigation, eternal pains without intermission, which thou canst neither suffer nor avoid. Fear them while thou grudgest at these. Lay thyself low under the hand of thy good God, and be thankful for a tolerable misery.

How graciously hath the wisdom of our God thought fit to temper our afflictions, so contriving them, that if they be sharp they are not long, and if they be long they are not over sharp, that our strength might not be overlaid by our trials either way!

Be content, man; either thy languishment shall be easy, or thy pain soon over. *Extreme* and *everlasting* are terms reserved for God's enemies in the other world. That is truly long which hath no end; that is truly painful which is not capable of any relaxation. What a short moment is it that thou canst suffer! short, yea nothing, in respect of that eternity which thou must either hope for or fear. Smart a while patiently, that thou mayest not be infinitely miserable.

Sect. VIII.—7. *Comfort.—The benefit of the exercise of our patience.*

Thou complainest of pain: what use were there of thy patience if thou ailedst nothing? God never gives virtues without an intent of their exercise. To what purpose were our Christian valour, if we had no enemy to encounter?

Thus long thou hast lien quiet in a secure garrison, where thou hast heard no trumpet but thine own, and hast turned thy drums into a dicing-table, lavishing out thy days in varieties of

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idle recreations; now God draws thee forth into the field and shows thee an enemy: where is thy Christian fortitude if thou shrink back, and, cowardly wheeling about, choosest rather to make use of thy heels than of thy hands? Doth this beseem thee, who professest to fight under his colours, who is the great Conqueror of death and hell? Is this the way to that happy victory, which shall carry away a crown of glory?

My son, if thou faint in the day of thine adversity, thy strength is but small. Stir up thine holy courage: *Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, Eph. vi. 10. Buckle close with that fierce enemy wherewith thy God would have thee assaulted; looking up to him who hath said, and cannot fail to perform it, *Be faithful to the death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

SECT. IX.—8. *Comfort.—The necessity of expecting sickness.*

Thou art surprised with sickness: whose fault is this but thine own? Who bade thee not to look for so sure a guest?

The very frame of thy body should have put thee into other thoughts. Dost thou see this living fabric made up, as a clock consisting of so many wheels and gimmers, and couldest thou imagine that some of them should not be ever out of order? Couldest thou think that a cottage, not too strongly built, and standing so bleak, in the very mouth of the winds, could for any long time hold right and unreaved? Yea, dost thou not rather wonder that it hath outstood so many blustering blasts thus long, utterly unruined? or that the wires of that engine should so long have held pace with time?

It was scarce a patient question which Job asked, *Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh as brass?* Job vi. 12. No, alas! Job, thy best metal is but clay, and thine, as all flesh, is grass; the clay mouldereth, and the grass withereth: what do we make account of any thing but misery and fickleness in this woful region of change? If we will needs over-reckon our condition, we do but help to aggravate our own wretchedness.

SECT. X.—9. *Comfort.—God's most tender regard to us in sickness.*

Thou art retired to thy sick bed: be of good comfort; God was never so near thee, never so tenderly indulgent to thee, as now.

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The whole, saith our Saviour, *need not the physician, but the sick.* Lo, the physician, as being made for the time of necessity, cometh not but where there is need; where need is, he will not fail to come, Ecclus. xxxviii. 1. Our need is motive enough to Him who himself *took our infirmities and bare our sickness,* Matt. viii. 17. Our health estranges him from us. While thou art his patient, he cannot be kept off from thee. *The Lord,* saith the Psalmist, *will strengthen thee upon the bed of languishing. Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.* Ps. xli. 3. Lo, the heavenly Comforter doth not only visit, but attend thee; and if thou find thy pallet uneasy, he shall turn and soften it for thy repose.

Canst thou not read God's gracious indulgence in thine own disposition? Thou art a parent of children; perhaps thou findest cause to affect one more than another, though all be dear enough; but if any one of them be cast down with a feverous distemper, now thou art more carefully busy about him than all the rest: how thou pitiest him! how thou pliest him with offers and receipts! with what silent anxiety dost thou watch by his couch! listening for every of his breathings; jealous of every whispering that might break off his slumber; answering every of his groans with so many sighs; and, in short, so making of him for the time, that thy greatest darling seems the while neglected in comparison of this more needful charge! How much more shall the Father of mercies be compassionately intent upon the sufferings of his dear children, according to the proportion of their afflictions!

Sect. XI.—10. *Comfort.—The comfortable end of our sufferings.*

Thou art wholly taken up with the extremity of thy pains: alas! poor soul, thy purblind eyes see nothing but what is laid close to thee. It is thy sense which thou followest, but where is thy faith? Couldst thou look to the end of thy sufferings, thou couldst not but *rejoice in tribulations. Let patience have her perfect work,* and thou shalt once say, *It is well for me that I was afflicted.*

Thou mightest be jocund long enough ere thy jollity could make thee happy; yea, *Woe be to them that laugh here,* Luke vi. 25: but, on the contrary, *our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,* 2 Cor. iv. 17. O blessed improvement of a few

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groans! O glorious issue of a short brunt of sorrow! What do we going for Christians if we be nothing but mere flesh and blood? and if we be more, we have more cause of joy than complaint; for while our *outward man perisheth, our inward man is renewed daily*, 2 Cor. iv. 16. Our outward man is but flesh; our inward is spirit, infinitely more noble than this living clay that we carry about us. While our spirit therefore gains more than our flesh is capable to lose, what reason have we not to boast of the bargain!

Let not therefore these close curtains confine thy sight; but cast up thine eyes to that heaven whence thy soul came, and see there that crown of glory which thy God holds forth for all that overcome, and *run with patience the race that is set before* thee, *looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, who is set down at the right hand of the throne of God*, Heb. xii. 2; and solace thyself with the expectation of that blessedness, which, if thy torments were no less than those of hell, would make more than abundant amends for all thy sufferings.

SECT. XII.—*The favour of a peaceable passage out of the world.*

Thou art sick to die, having received the sentence of death in thyself; thy physician hath given thee up to act this last part alone; neither art thou like to rise any more till the general resurrection. How many thousands have died lately, that would have thought it a great happiness to die thus quietly in their beds! whom the storm of war hath hurried away furiously into another world; snatching them suddenly out of this; not suffering them to take leave of that life which they are forced to abandon: whereas, thou hast a fair leisure to prepare thyself for the entertainment of thy last guest; to set both thine house in order and thy soul:

It is no small advantage, my son, thus to see death at a distance, and to observe every of his paces towards thee; that thou mayest put thyself into a fit posture to meet this grim messenger of heaven, who comes to fetch thee to immortality: that dying thus by gentle degrees, thou hast the leisure, with the holy patriarch Jacob, to call thy children about thee, to bequeath to each of them the dear legacy of thy benediction: and that being encompassed with thy sad friends, now in thy long journey to a far country, though thine and their home, thou mayest take a solemn farewell of them, as going somewhat before them to the appointed

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happy meeting-place of glory and blessedness: that one of thine own may close up those eyes which shall in their next opening see the face of thy most glorious Saviour; and see the flesh, now ready to lie down in corruption, made like to his, in unspeakable glory.

CHAP. II.

COMFORTS FOR THE SICK SOUL.

SECT. I.—*The happiness of a deep sorrow for sin.*

THY sin lies heavy upon thy soul:—blessed be God that thou feelest it so: many a one hath more weight upon him and boasteth of ease.

There is music in this complaint: the Father of mercies delights to hear it, as next to the melody of saints and angels. Go on still, and continue these sorrowful notes, if ever thou look for sound comfort. It is this *godly sorrow that worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of:* 2 Cor. vii. 10.

Weep still, and make not too much haste to dry up these tears, for they are precious, and held fit to be reserved in *the bottle of the Almighty*, Ps. lvi. 8. Overspeeding remedies may prove injurious to the patient: and as in the body, so in the soul, diseases and tumours must have their due maturation ere there can be a perfect cure. The inwards of the sacrifice must be three times rinsed with water[c]: one ablution will not serve the turn. But when thou hast emptied thine eyes of tears, and unloaded thy breast of leisurely sighs, I shall then, by full commission from him that hath the power of remission, say to thee, *Son, be of good comfort, thy sins be forgiven thee.*

SECT. II.—*Comfort from the well-grounded declaration of pardon.*

Think not this word merely formal and forceless. He *that hath the keys of hell and of death* (Rev. i. 18), hath not said in vain, *Whose sins ye remit, they are remitted.* The words of his faithful ministers on earth are ratified in heaven. Only the priest, under the Law, had power to pronounce the leper clean, Lev. xiii. 3; had any other Israelite done it, it had been as unprofitable as presumptuous.

It is a precious word that fell from Elihu; *When a man's soul*

[c] Lev. i. 9. Heb. Doct. in locum.

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draweth nigh to the grave, and his life to the destroyers. If there be a messenger (of God) with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto that man his uprightness: then he (i. e. God) *is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.* Job xxxiii. 22, 23, 24.

Behold, this is thy case, my son: the life of thy soul is in danger of the destroyer through his powerful temptations. I am, howsoever unworthy, a messenger sent to thee from heaven; and in the name of the great God that sent me, I do here, upon the sight of thy serious repentance, before angels and men, declare thy soul to stand right in the court of heaven: the invaluable ransom of thy dear Saviour is laid down and accepted for thee: thou art delivered from going down into the pit of horror and perdition.

SECT. III.—*Aggravation of the grievous condition of the patient: and remedies from mercy applied.*

"O happy message," thou sayest, "were it as sure as it is comfortable! But, alas! my heart finds many and deep grounds of fear and diffidence, which will not easily be removed. That smites me while you offer to acquit me, and tells me I am in a worse condition than a looker on can imagine. My sins are beyond measure heinous; such as my thoughts tremble at; such as I dare not utter to the God that knows them, and against whom only they are committed. There is horror in their very remembrance: what will there then be in their retribution?"

They are bitter things that thou urgest against thyself, my son: no adversary could plead worse.

But I admit thy vileness. Be thou as bad as Satan can make thee: it is not either his malice or thy wickedness that can shut thee out from mercy. Be thou as foul as sin can make thee; yet there is *a fountain opened to the house of David*, a bloody fountain, in the side of thy Saviour, *for sin and for uncleanness*, Zech. xiii. 1. Be thou as leprous as that Syrian was of old, if thou canst but wash seven times in the waters of this Jordan, thou canst not but be clean: *thy flesh shall come again to thee like to the flesh of a little child*, 2 Kings v. 14, thou shalt be at once sound and innocent. Be thou stung unto death with the fiery serpents of this wilderness; yet if thou canst but cast thine eyes to that brazen serpent which is erected there, thou canst not fail of cure.

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Wherefore came the Son of God into the world but *to save sinners?* add if thou wilt, *whereof I am chief:* thou canst say no worse by thyself than a better man did before thee; who, in the right of a sinner claimeth the benefit of a Saviour, 1 Tim. i. 15. Were it not for our sin, what use were there of a Redeemer? Were not our sin heinous, how should it have required such an expiation as the blood of the eternal Son of God?

Take comfort to thyself, my son: the greatness of thy sin serves but to magnify the mercy of the Forgiver. To remit the debt of some few farthings, it were small thank; but to strike off the scores of thousands of talents, it is the height of bounty. Thus doth thy God to thee: he hath suffered thee to run on in his books to so deep a sum, that when thy conscious heart hath proclaimed thee bankrupt, he may infinitely oblige thee and glorify his own mercy in crossing the reckoning and acquitting thy soul.

All sums are equally dischargeable to the munificence of our great Creditor in heaven: as it is the act of his justice to call for the least, so of his mercy to forgive the greatest. Had we to do with a finite power, we had reason to sink under the burden of our sins: now there is neither more nor less to that which is infinite: only let thy care be to lay hold on that infinite mercy which lies open to thee: and as thou art an object fit for mercy, in that thou art in thyself sinful and miserable enough; so, find thyself, as thou art, a subject meet to receive this mercy as a penitent believer. Open and enlarge thy bosom to take in this free grace, and close with thy blessed Saviour; and, in him, possess thyself of remission, peace, salvation.

Sect. IV.—*Complaint of unrepentance and unbelief.*

"Sweet words," thou sayest, "to those that are capable of them. But what is all this to me, that am neither penitent nor believer? Alas! that which is honey to others is no better than gall and wormwood to me, who have not the grace to repent and believe as I ought." Why wilt thou, my son, be so unwise and unjust as to take part with Satan against thine own soul? Why wilt thou be so unthankfully injurious to the Father of mercies, as to deny those graces which his good Spirit hath so freely bestowed upon thee? If thou wert not penitent for thy sins, wherefore are these tears? What mean these sighs and sobs and passionate expressions of sorrow which I hear from thee? It is no worldly loss that thus afflicts thee: it is no bodily distemper that thus

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disquiets thee: doubtless thou art soul-sick, my son: thy spirit is deeply wounded within thee, and what can thus affect thy soul but sin? and what can this affection of thy soul be for sin, but true penitence?

SECT. V.—*Complaint of a misgrounded sorrow satisfied.*

"Alas!" thou sayest, "I am indeed sorrowful for my sin, but not upon the right grounds. I grieve for the misery that my sin hath brought upon me, not for the evil of my sin; for the punishment, not the offence; for my own danger, not for the displeasure of my good God."

Beware, my son, lest an undue humility cause thee to belie the graces of God's Spirit. Thou art no meet judge of thyself while thou art under temptations.

Had not thy sorrow a relation to thy God, why wouldest thou thus sigh towards heaven? why would thy heart challenge thee for unkindness in offending? why dost thou cry out of the foulness, not only of the peril, of thy sin? what is it that makes the act of sin to be sinful, but the offence of the Divine Majesty? How canst thou then be sorry that thou hast sinned, and not be sorry that thou hast offended?

Tell me, what is it that thy conscience primarily suggests to thee in this deep impression of thy sorrow? Is it, thou shalt be punished? or is it not rather, thou hast sinned? And were it put to thy choice, whether thou hadst rather enjoy the favour of God with the extremest smart, or be in his displeasure with ease; whether wouldst thou pitch upon? Or, if liberty were tendered unto thee, that thou mightest freely sin without the danger of punishment; whether doth not thy heart rise at the condition, as ready to flee in the face of the offerer?

Besides fear and horror, dost thou not find an inward kind of indignation at thy miscarriage; and such an hatred of thy sin that were it to be done again, if it were possible to be hid from God and men, and if there were not an hell to avenge it, thou wouldst abhor to commit it?

All these are strong convictions of the right grounds of thy repentance, and of the wrong which thou dost to thine own soul in the unjust scruples which thou raisest against it.

SECT. VI.—*Complaint of the insufficient measure of sorrow satisfied.*

"If the grounds," thou sayest, "of my repentance be right;

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yet the measure is insufficient. I am sorrowful for my sins; but not enough. An effectual grief for sin should be serious, deep, hearty, intensive; mine is slight and superficial. I sigh, but my sighs come not from the bottom of an humble heart; I can sometimes weep, but I cannot pour out myself into tears; I mourn, but I do not dwell upon my sorrow."

My son, thou hast to do with a God, which, in all the dispositions of our soul, regards truth and not quantity. If he find thy remorse sound, he stands not upon measure. He doth not mete out our repentance by inches or by hours; but where he finds sincerity of penitence he is graciously indulgent.

Look upon David, and acknowledge his sin formidably heinous; no less than adultery seconded with inebriation and murder; yet no sooner did he, in a true compunction of heart, cry *Peccavi, I have sinned against the Lord;* than he hears, from the same mouth that accused him, *The Lord also hath put away thy sin: thou shalt not die*, 2 Sam. xii. 13. You do not hear of any tearing of hair, or rending of garments, or knockings of breast, or lying in sackcloth and ashes; but only a penitent confession availing for the expiation of so grievous crimes.

Thou art deceived, if thou thinkest God delights in the misery and afflictedness of his creature. So far only is the grief in his dear ones pleasing unto him as it may make for the health of their souls, in the due sensibleness of their sin, in their meet capacity of mercy.

I do not, with some casuists, flatter thee with an opinion of the sufficiency of any slight attrition, and empty wishes that thou hadst not sinned. Doubtless, a true contrition of spirit and compunction of heart are necessarily required to a saving repentance; and these, wert thou but an indifferent censurer of thine own ways, thou couldst not choose but find within thyself: why else is thy countenance so dejected; thy cheeks pale, and watered so oft with thy tears; thy sleeps broken; thy meals stomachless? wherefore are thy so sad bemoanings and vehement deprecations?

But, after all this, be thou such as thou accusest thyself, defective in the measure of thy repentance; dost thou rest contented in this condition? dost thou not complain of it as thy greatest misery? art thou not heartily sorry, that thou canst be no more sorry for thy sin? Comfort thyself, my son: even this, this alone is an acceptable degree of repentance. Our God, whose will is

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his deed, accounts ours so. What is repentance but a change of mind from evil to good? And how sensible is this change! that thou, who formerly delightedst in thy sin, now abhorrest it, and thyself for it; and art yet ambitious of more grief, for being transported into it!

Let not the enemy of thy soul, who desires nothing more than to make thee perfectly miserable, win so much of thee as to render thee unsatisfied with the measure of that penitence which is accepted of thy God; rather, turn thine eyes from thy sins, and look up to heaven; and fasten them there, upon thine all-sufficient Mediator, at the right hand of Majesty; and see his face smiling upon thine humble soul, and perfectly reconciling thee to his Eternal Father; as being fully assured, that, *being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God,* Rom. v. 1, 2,

SECT. VII.—*Complaint of the want of faith satisfied.*

"Yea, there, there," thou sayest, "is the very core of all my complaint. I want that faith that should give me an interest in my Saviour, and afford true comfort to my soul, and *boldness and access with confidence* to the throne of grace, Eph. iii. 12. I can sorrow, but I cannot believe. My grief is not so great as my infidelity. I see others full of *joy and peace in believing*, Rom. xv. 3, but my earthen heart cannot raise itself up to a comfortable apprehension of my Saviour, so as, methinks, I dwell in a kind of disconsolate darkness, and a sad lumpishness of unbelief, wanting that lightsome assurance which others profess to find in themselves.

Take heed, my son, lest, while thou art too querulous, thou prove unthankful; and lest, whilst thine humbleness disparages thyself, thou make God a loser. Many a man may have a rich mine lying deep in his ground which he knows not of. There are shells that are inwardly furnished with pearls of great price, and are not sensible of their worth. This is thy condition; thou hast that grace which thou complainest to want. It is no measuring of thyself by sense, especially in the time of temptation. Thou couldst not so feelingly bemoan the want of faith, if thou hadst it not.

Deny it, if thou canst; thou assentest to the truth of all the

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gracious promises of God; thou acknowledgest he could not be himself, if he were not a true God, yea, truth itself; thou canst not doubt but that he hath made sweet promises of free grace and mercy to all penitent sinners; thou canst not but grant that thou art sinful enough to need mercy, and sorrowful enough to desire and receive mercy; canst thou but love thyself so well as that, when thou seest a pardon reached forth to thee to save thy soul from death, thou shouldst do any other than stretch forth thy hand to take it? Lo, this hand stretched forth is thy faith, which so takes spiritual hold of thy Saviour, that it calls not thy sense to witness.

As for that assurance thou speakest of, they are happy that can truly feel and maintain it; and it must be our holy ambition, what we may, to aspire unto it; but that is such an height of perfection as every traveller in this wretched pilgrimage cannot, while he is in this perplexed and heavy way, hope to attain unto.

It is an unsafe and perilous path which those men have walked in who have been wont to define all faith by assurance. Should I lead thee that way, it might cost thee a fall. So sure a certainty of our constant and reflected apprehension of eternal life is both hard to get, and not easy to hold unmovably, considering the many and strong temptations that we are subject unto in this vale of misery and death. Should faith be reduced unto this trial, it would be yet more rare than our Saviour hath foretold it; for as many a one boasts of such an assurance who is yet failing of a true faith, hugging a vain presumption instead of it, so, many a one also hath true faith in the Lord Jesus who yet complains to want this assurance.

Canst thou, in a sense of thine own misery, close with thy Saviour? canst thou throw thyself into the arms of his mercy? canst thou trust him with thy soul? and repose thyself upon him for forgiveness and salvation? canst thou lay thyself before him as a miserable object of his grace and mercy? and when it is held forth to thee, canst thou lay some, though weak hold upon it? Labour what thou mayest for further degrees of strength daily; set not up thy rest in this pitch of grace, but cheer up thyself, my son; even thus much faith shall save thy soul. Thou believest; and he hath said it that is Truth itself: *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life,* John iii. 36.

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SECT. VIII.—*Complaint of the weakness of faith.*

"I know," thou sayest, "that *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners*, and that *whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have eternal life*, John iii. 15; neither can I deny but that, in a sense of my own sinful condition, I do cast myself in some measure upon my Saviour, and lay some hold upon his all-sufficient redemption; but, alas! my apprehensions of him are so feeble, as that they can afford no sound comfort to my soul."

Courage, my son; were it that thou lookedst to be justified and saved by the power of the very act of thy faith, thou hadst reason to be disheartened with the conscience of the weakness thereof; but now that the virtue and efficacy of this happy work is in the object apprehended by thee, which is the infinite merits and mercy of thy God and Saviour, which cannot be abated by thine infirmities, thou hast cause to take heart to thyself, and cheerfully to expect his salvation.

Understand thy case aright. Here is a double hand that helps us up towards heaven; our hand of faith lays hold upon our Saviour; our Saviour's hand of mercy and plenteous redemption lays hold on us: our hold of him is feeble, and easily loosed; his hold of us is strong, and irresistible. Comfort thyself, therefore, in this with the blessed apostle: when thou art weak, then thou art strong; when weak in thyself, strong in thy Redeemer. Shouldst thou boast of thy strength, and say, *Tush, I shall never be moved*, I should suspect the truth and safety of thy condition; now thou bewailest thy weakness, I cannot but encourage and congratulate the happy estate of thy soul. If work were stood upon, a strength of hand were necessary; but now that only taking and receiving of a precious gift is required, why may not a weak hand do that as well as a strong? as well, though not as forcibly. Be not, therefore, dejected with the want of thine own power; but comfort thyself in the rich mercies of thy blessed Redeemer.

SECT. IX.—*Complaint of inconstancy and desertion answered.*

Now thou sayest, "Sometimes, I confess, I find my heart at ease in a comfortable reliance on my Saviour; and, being well resolved of the safety of my estate, promise good days to myself; and, after the banishment of my former fears, dare bid defiance to temptations; but, alas! how soon is this fair weather over!

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how suddenly is this clear sky overclouded, and spread over with a sad darkness, and I return to my former heartlessness!"

Didst thou conceive, my son, that grace would put thee into a constant and perpetual invariable condition of soul, while thou art in this earthly warfare? Didst thou ever hear or read of any of God's prime saints upon earth that were unchangeable in their holy dispositions while they continued in this region of mutability?

Look upon the man after God's own heart. Thou shalt find him sometimes so courageous as if the spirits of all his worthies were met in his one bosom; how resolutely doth he blow off all dangers, trample on all enemies, triumph over all cross events! another while thou shalt find him so dejected as if he were not the man. One while, *The Lord is my Shepherd: I shall lack nothing*, Ps. xxiii. 1: another while, *Why art thou then so sad, my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me?* xlii. 14. One while, *I will not be afraid for ten thousands of the people that have set themselves against me round about*, iii. 6; another while, *Hide me under the shadow of thy wings from the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies who compass me about*, xvii. 8, 9. One while, *Thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes, and I have walked in thy truth*, xxvi. 3; another while, *Lord, where are thy lovingkindnesses?* lxxxix. 49. Yea, dost thou not hear him with one breath professing his confidence and lamenting his desertion? *Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled*, xxx. 7.

Look upon the Chosen Vessel, the great apostle of the Gentiles. One while thou shalt see him erecting trophies in himself of victory to his God; *In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us*, Rom. viii. 37: another while thou shalt find him bewailing his own sinful condition; *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. vii. 24. One while thou shalt find him caught up into the third heaven, and there in the paradise of God; another while thou shalt find him buffeted by the messenger of Satan, and sadly complaining to God of the violence of that assault.

Hear the Spouse of Christ, whether the Church in common, or the faithful soul, bemoaning herself: *I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone; my soul*

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failed when he spake. I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer. Cant. v. 6.

Thus it will be with thee, my son, while thou art in this frail flesh. The temper of thy soul will be, like her partner, subject to vicissitudes. Shouldst thou continue always in the same state, I should more than suspect thee. This is the difference betwixt nature and grace, that nature is still uniform, and like itself; grace varies according to the pleasure of the Giver; the Spirit breathes when and where it listeth, John iii. 8. When therefore the gracious spirations of the Holy Ghost are within thee, be thankful to the infinite munificence of that blessed Spirit, and still pray, *Arise, O north, and come, thou south wind, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out,* Cant. iv. 16. But when thou shalt find thy soul becalmed, and not a leaf stirring in this garden of thine, be not too much dejected with an ungrounded opinion of being destitute of thy God. Neither do thou repine at the seasons or measures of his bounty: that most free and infinitely beneficent Agent will not be tied to our terms, but will give what and how and when he pleaseth. Only do thou humbly wait upon his goodness, and be *confident, that he who hath begun his good work in thee will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ,* Phil. i. 6.

SECT. X.—*Complaint of unregeneration and deadness in sin answered.*

"It is true," thou sayest, "if God had begun his good work in me, he would at the last, for his own glory's sake, make it up; but for me, I am a man dead in sins and trespasses; neither ever had I any true life of grace in me; some show indeed I have made of a Christian profession, but I have only beguiled the eyes of the world with a mere pretence, and have not found in myself the truth and solidity of those heavenly virtues whereof I have made a formal ostentation."

It were pity, my son, thou shouldst be so bad as thou makest thyself. I have no comfort in store for hypocrisy; no disposition can be more odious to the God of Truth; insomuch as, when he would express his utmost vengeance against sinners, he hath no more fearful terms to set it forth, than—*I will appoint him his portion with the hypocrites,* Matt. xxiv. 51. Were it thus with thee, it were more than high time for thee to resolve thyself into dust and ashes, and to put thyself into the hands of thine Almighty Creator, to be moulded anew by his powerful Spirit, and never

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to give thyself peace till thou findest thyself *renewed in the spirit of* thy *mind,* Eph. iv. 23.

But, in the mean while, take heed lest thou be found guilty of misjudging thy own soul, and misprising the work of God's Spirit in thee. God hath been better to thee than thou wilt be known of; thou hast true life of grace in thee, and, for the time, perceivest it not. It is no heed to take of the doom thou passest upon thyself in the hour of temptation. When thy heart was free, thou wert in another mind, and shalt, upon better advice, return to thy former thoughts. It is with thee as it was with Eutychus, that fell down from the third loft, and was taken up for dead; yet, for all that, his life was in him. We have known those who have lain long in trances, without any perception of life; yea, some, as that subtle Johannes Duns Scotus, have been put into their graves for fully dead, when as yet their soul hath been in them, though unable to exert those faculties which might evince her hidden presence. Such thou mayest be at the worst; yea, wert thou but in charity with thyself, thou wouldst be found in a much better condition.

There is the same reason of the natural life and the spiritual. Life, where it is, is discerned by breathing, sense, motion.

Where there is the breath of life, there must be a life that sends it forth. If then the soul breathes forth holy desires, doubtless there is a life whence they proceed. Now, deny, if thou canst, that thou hast these spiritual breathings of holy desires within thee. Dost thou not many a time sigh for thine own insensateness? is not thine heart troubled with the thoughts of thy want of grace? dost thou not truly desire that God would *renew a right spirit within* thee? Take comfort to thyself; this is the work of the inward principle of God's Spirit within thee. As well may a man breathe without life as thou couldst be thus affected without grace.

Sense is a quick descrier of life; pinch or wound a dead man, he feels nothing, but the living perceiveth the easiest touch. When thou hast heard the fearful judgments of God denounced against sinners, and laid home to the conscience, hast thou not found thy heart pierced with them? hast thou not shrunk inward, and secretly thought, "How shall I decline this dreadful damnation?" When thou hast heard the sweet mercies of God laid forth to penitent sinners, hath not thy heart silently said, "Oh that I had my share in them?" When thou hast heard the

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name of Christ blasphemed, hast thou not felt a secret horror in thy bosom? All these argue a true spiritual life within thee.

Motion is the most perfect discoverer of life. He that can stir his limbs is surely not dead. The feet of the soul are the affections. Hast thou not found in thyself a hate and detestation of that sin whereinto thou hast been miscarried? hast thou not found in thyself a true grief of heart for thy wretched indisposition to all good things? hast thou not found a secret love to and complacency in those whom thou hast thought truly godly and conscionable? Without a true life of grace these things could never have been. Are not thine eyes and hands many times lifted up in an imploration of mercy? Canst thou deny that thou hast a true though but weak appetite to the means and further degrees of grace? What can this be but that *hunger and thirst after righteousness* to which our Saviour hath pronounced blessedness?

Discomfort not thyself too much, my son, with the present disappearance of grace during the hour of thy temptation. It is no otherwise with thee than with a tree in winter season whose sap is run down to the root, wherein there is no more show of the life of vegetation by any buds or blossoms that it might put forth than if it were stark dead; yet, when the sun returns, and sends forth his comfortable beams in the spring, it burgens out afresh, and bewrays that vital juice which lay long hidden in the earth. No otherwise than with the hearth of some good housewife, which is towards night swept up, and hideth the fire under the heap of her ashes: a stranger would think it were quite out: here is no appearance of light or heat or smoke, but by that time she hath stirred it up a little the bright gleeds shew themselves, and are soon raised to a flame. Stay but till the spring, when the Sun of Righteousness shall call up thy moisture into thy branches; stay but till the morning, when the fire of grace which was raked up in the ashes shall be drawn forth and quickened; and thou shalt find cause to say of thy heart, as Jacob said of his hard lodging, *Surely, the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not,* Gen. xxviii. 16. Only do thou, not neglecting the means, wait patiently upon God's leisure; stay quietly upon the bank of this Bethesda till the angel descend and move the water.

SECT. XI.—*Complaint of the insensibleness of the time and means of conversion.*

"I could gladly," thou sayest, "attend with patience upon

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God in this great and happy work of the excitation of grace, were I but sure I had it; could I be but persuaded of the truth of my conversion. But it is my great misery that here I am at a sad and uncomfortable loss. For I have been taught that every true convert can design the time, the place, the means, the manner of his conversion; and can show how near he was brought to the gates of death, how close to the very verge of hell, when God, by a mighty and outstretched arm, snatched him away in his own sensible apprehension from the pit, and suddenly rescued him from that damnation, and put him into a new state of spiritual life and undefeasible salvation. All which I cannot do: not finding in myself any such sudden and vehement concussion and heartbreaking; any such forcible and irresistible operation of God's Spirit within me; not being able to design the sermon that converted me, or those particular approaches that my soul made towards an hardly-recovered desperation."

My son, it is not safe for any man to take upon him to set limits to the ways of the Almighty, or to prescribe certain rules to the proceedings of that Infinite Wisdom. That most free and all-wise Agent will not be tied to walk always in one path, but varies his courses according to the pleasure of his own will.

One man he calls suddenly; another, by leisure: one, by a kind of holy violence, as he did St. Paul; another, by sweet solicitations, as Philip, Nathanael, Andrew, Peter, Matthew, and the rest of the Apostles: one man he draws to heaven with gracious invitations, another he drives thither by a strong hand.

We have known those, who, having mispent their younger times in notoriously lewd and debauched courses, living as without God, yea, against him, have been suddenly heartstricken with some powerful denunciation of judgment, which hath so wrought upon them, that it hath brought them within sight of hell; who, after long and deep humiliation, have been raised up, through God's mercy, to a comfortable sense of the divine favour; and have proceeded to a very high degree of regeneration, and lived and died saints. But this is not every man's case.

Those who having from their infancy been brought up *in the nurture and fear of the Lord*, Eph. vi. 4, and from their youth have been trained up under a godly and conscionable ministry, where they have been continually plied with the effectual means of grace; *precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little*, Isa. xxviii. 10; and have by an insensible convey-

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ance received the gracious inoperations of the Spirit of God, (though not without many inward strifes with temptations and sad fits of humiliation for their particular failings,) framing them to an holy obedience; these cannot expect to find so sensible alterations in themselves. As well may the child know when he was naturally born as these may know the instant of their spiritual regeneration, and as well may they see the grass to grow as they can perceive their insensible increase of grace. It is enough that the child, attaining to the use of reason, now knows that he was born, and that when we see the grass higher than we left it, we know that it is grown.

Let it then suffice thee, my son, to know that the thing is done, though thou canst not define the time and manner of doing it. Be not curious in matter of particular perceptions, while thou mayest be assured of the reality and truth of the grace wrought in thee. Thou seest the skilful chirurgeon, when he will make a fontanel in the body of his patient, he can do it either by a sudden incision or by a leisurely corrosive; both sort to one end, and equally tend towards health. Trust God with thyself, and let him alone with his own work: what is it to thee which way he thinks best to bring about thy salvation?

SECT. XII.—*Complaint of irresolution and uncertainty in matter of our election answered.*

"All were safe," thou sayest, "if only I could be ascertained of mine election to life: I could be patient, so I might be sure: but, wretched man that I am, here, here I stick! I see others walk confidently and comfortably, as if they were in heaven already: whereas I droop under a continual diffidence, raising unto myself daily new arguments of my distrust: could my heart be settled in this assurance, nothing could ever make me other than happy."

It is true, my son, that as all other mercies flow from this of our election, so the securing of this one involves all other favours that concern the well-being of our souls.

It is no less true that our election may be assured; else the Holy Ghost had never laid so deep a charge upon us, to do our utmost endeavour to ascertain it; and we shall be much wanting to ourselves, if, hearing so excellent a blessing may be attained by our diligence, we shall slacken our hand, and not stretch it forth to the height, to reach that crown which is held out to us.

But, withal, it is true, that if there were not difficulty more than

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ordinary in this work, the apostle had not so earnestly called for the utmost of our endeavour to effect it[c].

Shortly, the truth is, in all Christianity there is no path wherein there is more need of treading warily, than in this: on each side is danger and death. Security lies on the one hand, presumption on the other; the miscarriage either way is deadly.

Look about thee, and see the miserable examples of both kinds. Some walk carelessly, as if there were no heaven; or if there were such a place, yet as if it nothing concerned them: their hearts are taken up with earth; neither care nor wish to be other than this world can make them: *The God of this world hath blinded their minds that believe not,* 2 Cor. iv. 4. Some others walk proudly; being vainly puft up with their own ungrounded imaginations; as if they were already invested with their glory; as if, being wrapt up with the Chosen Vessel into the third heaven, they had there seen their names recorded in the Book of Life; whereas this is nothing but an illusion of that lying spirit, who knows the way to keep them for ever out of heaven is to make them believe they are there.

It must be thy main care to walk even in a just equidistance from both these extremes; and so to compose thyself, that thou mayest be resolute without presumption, and careful without diffidence.

And first, I advise thee to abandon those false teachers, whose trade is to improve their wits for the discomfort of souls, in broaching the sad doctrines of uncertainty and distrust. Be sure our Saviour had never bidden his disciples to rejoice that their *names are written in heaven,* (Luke x. 20,) if there had not been a particular enrolment of them; or if that record had been alterable, or if the same disciples could never have attained to the notice of such inscription.

Neither is this a mercy peculiar to his domestic followers alone, but universal to all that shall believe through their word. Even thou and I are spoken to in them. So sure as we have names, we may know them registered in those eternal records above.

Not that we should take an Acesius' ladder, and climb up into heaven, and turn over the book of God's secret counsels, and read ourselves designed to glory; but that, as we by experience see that we can by reflections see and read those letters which

[c] 2 Pet. i. 10. Σπουδάσατε.

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directly we cannot; so we may do here in this highest of spiritual objects. The same apostle that gives us our charge gives us withal our direction: *Wherefore,* saith he, *brethren, give all diligence to make your calling and election sure,* διὰ τῶν καλῶν ἔργων, as divers copies read it, *by good works: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,* 2 Pet. i. 10, 11.

Lo, first our *calling,* then our *election.* Not that we should begin with heaven, and thence descend to the earth: it is enough for the angels on that celestial ladder of Jacob to both descend and ascend; but that we should from earth ascend to heaven; from our *calling* to our *election;* as knowing that God shows what he hath done for us above by that which he hath wrought in us here below.

Our *calling* therefore, first; not outward and formal, but inward and effectual. The Spirit of God hath a voice, and our soul hath an ear. That voice of the Spirit speaks inwardly and effectually to the ear of the soul, calling us out of the state of corrupt nature into the state of grace, out of darkness into his marvellous light.

By thy calling therefore, mayest thou judge of thine *election.* God never works in vain: neither doth he ever cast away his saving graces, whatever become of the common. But, *whom he did predestinate, them also he called; and whom he called, them he justified; and whom he justified, them also he glorified,* Rom. viii. 30.

"This, doubtless," thou sayest, "is sure in itself; but how is it assured to me?" Resp. That which the apostle adds, as it is read in some copies, *By good works,* if therein we also comprehend the acts of believing and repenting, is a notable evidence of our election. But, not to urge that clause, which though read in the Vulgar is found wanting in our editions, the clear words of the text evince no less: *For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.* Here is our negative certainty. And for our positive: *So an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* Lo, if we shall never fall, if we shall undoubtedly enter into the kingdom of Christ, what possible scruple can be made of the blessed accomplishment of our election?

What then are these things which must be done by us? Cast

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your eyes upon that precious chain of graces which you shall find stringed up in the foregoing words. If you *add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity,* 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7. If you would know what God hath written concerning you in heaven, look into your own bosom; see what graces he hath there wrought in you. Truth of grace, saith the divine apostle, will make good the certainty of your election.

Not to instance in the rest of that heavenly combination, do but single out the first and the last, *faith* and *charity.*

For *faith,* how clear is that of our Saviour, *He that believeth in him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but hath passed from death to life!* John v. 24. Lo, what access can danger have into heaven? All the peril is in the way: now the believer is already passed into life.

This is the grace by which *Christ dwells in our hearts,* Eph. iii. 17, and whereby we have communion with Christ, and an assured testimony of and from him: for, *He that believeth in the Son of God hath the witness in himself,* 1 John v. 10. And what witness is that? *This is the record, that God hath given us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life,* vv. 11, 12. O happy and sure connexion! Eternal life, first: this life eternal is in and by Christ Jesus: this Jesus is ours by faith: this faith witnesseth to our souls our assurance of life eternal.

Charity is the last: which comprehends our love both to God and man; for from the reflection of God's love to us there ariseth a love from us to God again. The beloved disciple can say, *We love him because he loved us first,* 1 John iv. 19; and from both these resulteth our love to our brethren. Behold, so full an evidence, that the apostle tells us, expressly, that *we know we are passed from death to life, because we love the brethren,* 1 John iii. 14. For the love of the Father is inseparable from the love of the Son: *He that loveth him that begets loves him that is begotten of him,* 1 John v. 1.

Now then, my son, deal unpartially with thine own heart. Ask of it seriously, as in the presence of the Searcher of all hearts, whether thou dost not find in thyself these unfailing evidences of thine election. Art thou not effectually, though not perfectly, called out of the world and corrupt nature? Dost thou not in-

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wardly abhor thy former sinful ways? Dost thou not think of what thou wert with detestation? Dost thou not heartily desire and endeavour to be in all things approved to God, and conformed to thy Saviour? Dost thou not gladly cast thyself upon the Lord Jesus, and depend upon his free all-sufficiency for pardon and salvation? Dost thou not love that Infinite Goodness, who hath been so rich in mercies to thee? Dost thou not love and bless those gleams of goodness which he hath cast upon his saints on earth? In plain terms, dost thou not love a good man, because he is good? Comfort thyself in the Lord, my son: let no fainting qualms of fear and distrust possess thy soul: *Faithful is he that hath called thee,* who will also *preserve thy whole spirit and soul and body blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,* 1 Thess. v. 24, 23.

CHAP. III.

COMFORTS AGAINST TEMPTATIONS.

SECT. I.—*Christ himself assaulted.—Our trial is for our good.*

Thou art haunted with temptations: that which the enemy sees he cannot do by force or fraud, he seeks to effect by importunity:—

Can this seem strange to thee, when thou seest the Son of God in the wilderness forty days and forty nights under the hand of the tempter? He that durst thus set upon the *captain of our salvation,* (Heb. ii. 10,) *God blessed for ever,* how shall he spare frail flesh and blood? Why should that Saviour of thine, thinkest thou, suffer himself to be tempted, if not to bear thee out in all thy temptations? The keys of the bottomless pit are in his hands: he could have shut up that presumptuous spirit under chains of darkness, so as he could have come no nearer to him than hell; but he would let him loose and permit him to do his worst, purposely that we might not think much to be tempted, and that he might foil that great enemy for us.

Canst thou think, that he who now sits at the right hand of Majesty, commanding all the powers of heaven, earth, hell, could not easily keep off that malignant spirit from assailing thee? Canst thou think him less merciful than mighty? Would he die to save thee? and will he turn that ban-dog of hell loose upon thee to worry thee?

Dost thou not pray daily to thy Father in heaven, that he

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would not lead thee into temptation? If thou knowest thou hast to do with a God that heareth prayers, O thou of little faith, why fearest thou? Lo, he that was led by his own divine Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of that evil spirit, bids thee pray to the Father, that he would not lead thee into temptation; as implying that thou couldst not go into temptation unless he lead thee; and while he that is thy Father leads thee, how canst thou miscarry?

Let no man, when he is tempted, say, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil; neither tempteth he any man, James i. 13. God tempteth thee not, my son; yet know, that, being his, thou couldst not be tempted without him; both permitting and ordering that temptation to his own glory and thy good. That grace which thy God hath given thee he will have thus exercised, thus manifested. So we have known some indulgent father, who, being assured of the skill and valour of his dear son, puts him upon tiltings and barriers and public duels, and looks on with contentment, as well knowing that he will come off with honour. How had we known the admirable continency of good Joseph, if he had not been strongly solicited by a wanton mistress? How had we known David's valour, if the Philistines had not had a giantly challenger to encounter him? How had we known the invincible piety of the three children, if there had not been a furnace to try them? or of Daniel, if there had been no lions to accompany him? Be confident thy glory shall be according to the proportion of thy trial; neither couldst thou ever be so happy, if thou hadst not been beholding to temptations.

Sect. II.—*The powerful assistance of God's Spirit, and the example of St. Paul.*

"How often," thou sayest, "have I beaten off these wicked suggestions! yet still they turn upon me again, as if denials invited them; as if they meant to tire me with their continual solicitations; as if I must yield, and be overlaid, though not with their force, yet with their frequence."

Know, my son, that thou hast to do with *spiritual wickednesses,* Eph.vi.12, whose nature is therefore as unwearable as their malice unsatisfiable. Thou hast a spirit of thine own; and besides, God hath given thee of his: so he looks thou shouldst, through the power of his gracious assistance, match the importunity of that evil spirit with an indefatigable resistance; *Be strong therefore in*

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the Lord, and in the power of his might. And put on the whole armour of God, that thou mayest be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Eph. vi. 10, 11, 13.

Look upon a stronger champion than thyself, the blessed apostle: thou shalt find him in thine own condition: see *the messenger of Satan* sent *to buffet him,* 2 Cor. xii. 7: and he did it to purpose: how soundly was that Chosen Vessel buffeted on both sides, and how often! Thrice he besought the Lord that it might depart from him; but even yet it would not be; the temptation holds, only a comfort shall countervail it, *My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness,* v. 9.

It is not so much to be considered how hard thou art laid at, as how strongly thou art upheld. How many, with the blessed martyr Theodorus[d], have upon racks and gibbets found their consolations stronger than their pains! While therefore the goodness of thy God sustains and supplies thee with abundance of spiritual vigour and refreshment, answerable to the worst of thine assaults, what cause hast thou to complain of suffering?

The advice is high and heroical which the apostle James gives to his compatriots; *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations,* James i. 2. Let those temptations be rather trials by afflictions than suggestions of sin: yet even those overcome yield no small cause of triumph; for by them is our faith no less tried, and the trying of our faith worketh patience, and the perfect work of patience is a blessed entireness of grace. The number of enemies adds to the praise of the victory; to overcome single temptations is commendable, but to subdue troops of temptations is glorious.

SECT. III.—*The restraint of our spiritual enemies, and their overmatching by the power of God.*

"Alas!" thou sayest, "I am overlaid, not with multitudes only, but with power. In all challenges of duels there is wont to be respect had to the equality both of the combatants and weapons; but woe is me, how am I overmatched! For me, I am a weak wretch; and *we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places,* Eph. vi. 12. Behold *the Amorite, whose height is like the height*

[d] [Socr. Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 19. Sozom. lib. v. 20.]

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of the cedars, and their strength as the strength of oaks; Amos ii. 9. What are we but poor pismires in the valley, to these men of measures? *Who can stand before* these *sons of Anak?"*

I did not advise thee, my son, to be strong in thyself: alas! we are all made up of weakness; one of those powers of darkness were able to subdue a whole world of men: but to be *strong in the Lord,* whose lowest angel is able to vanquish a whole hell of devils; *and in the power of his might,* who commandeth the most furious of those infernal spirits to their chains. Woe were to us, if we were left to our own hands, there were no way with us but foiling and death. But *our help is in the name of the Lord,* who *hath made heaven and earth,* Ps. cxxiv. 8. *The Lord is our strength and our shield,* xxviii. 7. *He is our rock and our salvation: he is our defence, so as we shall not be moved,* lxii. 2, 6. *It is he that hath girded us with strength unto battle, and that subdueth those that rise up against us,* xviii. 39.

Take courage therefore to thyself, man; there cannot be so much difference betwixt thee and those hellish powers as there is betwixt them and the Almighty: their force is finite, and limited by his omnipotence. How fain dost thou think Jannes and Jambres, the great magicians of Egypt, by the conjoined powers of hell, would have made but a louse in an affront to Moses! yet they could not. How earnestly was that legion of devils fain to beg but for leave to prevail over a few Gadarene swine! How strong therefore soever they seem to thee, yet to Him they are so mere weakness, that they cannot so much as move without him. Who can fear a bear or a lion, when he sees them chained to their stake? Even children can behold them baited when they see their restraint.

Look not upon thyself, therefore: look not upon them: but look up to that overruling hand of the Almighty, who ordinates all their motions to his own holy purposes; and even out of their malice raises glory to himself and advantage to his servant.

Sect. IV.—*The advantage that is made to us by our temptations and foils.*

"It is a woful advantage," thou sayest, "that I have made of temptations: for, alas! I have been shamefully foiled by them: and what by their subtlety, and what by their violence, have been miscarried into a grievous sin against my God, and lie down in a just confusion of face, to have been so miserably vanquished."

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Hadst thou wanted tears, my son, for thine offence, I should willingly have lent thee some. It is indeed a heavy case that thou hast given thy deadly enemy this cause to triumph over thee, and hast thus provoked thy God. Be thou thoroughly humbled under the conscience of thy sin; and be not too sudden in snatching a pardon out of the hand which thou hast offended: be humbled, but, after thou hast made thy peace with God by a serious repentance, be not disheartened with thy failings.

Neither do I fear to tell thee of an advantage to be made, not of thy temptations only, but even of thy sin. What art thou other than a gainer, if, having been beaten down to thy knees, thou hast, in an holy indignation, risen up, and fought so much the more valiantly. A wound received doth but whet the edge of true fortitude: many a one had never been victorious, if he had not seen himself bleed first. Look where thou wilt upon all the saints of God: mark if thou canst see any one of them without his scars. O, the fearful gashes that we have seen in the noblest of God's champions upon earth; whose courage had never been raised so high, if it had not been out of the sense of some former discomfitures! As some well spirited wrestler therefore, be not so much troubled with thy fall, as zealous to repay it with a more successful grappling.

We know, saith the blessed apostle, *that all things work together for good to them that love God*, Rom. viii. 28: *all things*, yea, even those that are worse than nothing, their very sins. The Corinthians offended in their silent connivance at the incestuous person: the apostle's reproof produceth their sorrow: what was the issue? *For, behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge!* 2 Cor. vii. 11. Lo, what a marvellous advantage is here made of one offence! What hath Satan now gotten by this match? One poor Corinthian is misled to an incestuous copulation: the evil spirit rejoiceth to have got such a prey; but how long shall he enjoy it? Soon after, the offending soul, upon the apostle's holy censure, is reclaimed: he is delivered over to Satan, that Satan should never possess him. The Corinthians are raised to a greater height of godly zeal than ever. Corinth had never been so rich in grace, if it had not been defiled with so foul a crime.

Say now whether this be not in effect thy case. Shouldest thou

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ever have so much hated thy sin, if thou hadst not been drawn in to commit it? Shouldest thou have found in thyself so fervent love to thy God, if it had not been out of the sense of his great mercy in remitting it? Wouldest thou have been so wary of thy steps as now thou art, if thou hadst never slipped? Give glory to God, my son, while thou givest shame to thyself; and bless him for the benefit that he hath been pleased to make of thine offending him.

Sect. V.—*Complaint of relapses into sin, with the remedy thereof.*

"But alas!" thou sayest, "my case is far worse than it is conceived: I have been more than once miscarried into the same sin. Even after I have made profession of my repentance, I have been transported into my former wickedness. Having washed off my sin, as I thought, with my many tears, yet I have suffered my soul to be defiled with it again."

I may not flatter thee, my son. This condition is dangerous. Those diseases which upon their first seizure have without any great peril of the patient received cure, after a recidivation have threatened death.

Look upon the saints of God; thou shalt find they have kept aloof from that fire wherewith they have been formerly burnt: thou shalt not find Noah again uncovered, through drunkenness, in his tent; thou shalt not find Judah climbing up again to Tamar's bed; thou shalt not take Peter again in the high priest's hall denying his Master, or, after Paul's reproof, halting in his dissimulation, Gal. ii. 11–13.

But tell me, notwithstanding, art thou truly serious with thy God? Hast thou doubled thine humiliation for the reduplication of thine offence? Hast thou sought God so much the more instantly with an unfeigned contrition of heart? Hast thou found thy soul wrought to so much greater detestation of thy sin as thine acquaintance with it hath been more? Hast thou taken this occasion to lay better hold on thy Saviour, and to reinforce the vows of thy more careful and strict obedience? Be of good cheer; this unpurposed reiteration of thy sin shall be no prejudice to thy salvation.

It is one thing for a man to walk on willingly in a beaten path of sin, another thing for a man to be justled out of the way of righteousness by the violence of a temptation which he soon recovers again by a sound repentance. The best cannot but be

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overtaken with sin, but *he that is born of God doth not commit sin*, 1 John iii. 9. He may be transported whither he meant not, but he makes not a trade of doing ill; his heart is against that which his hand is drawn unto; and if in this inward strife he be overpowered, he lies not down in a willing yieldance, but struggles up again, and, in a resumed courage and indignation, tramples on that which formerly supplanted him.

Didst thou give thyself over to a resolved course of sinning, and betwixt whiles shouldest knock thy breast with a formal— *God forgive me*, I should have no comfort in store for thee, but send thee rather to the whipping stock of the Almighty for due correction, if possibly those seasonable stripes may prevent thine everlasting torments; but now, since *what thou hatest, that thou doest; and thou doest that which thou wouldest not; and it is no more thou that doest it, but sin that dwells in thee*, Rom. vii. 15—17; cry out as much as thou wilt on *the sinfulness of* thy *sin*, v. 13; bewail thy weakness with a better man than thyself, *O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* v. 24; but know that thou hast found mercy with thy God; thy repeated sin may grieve, but cannot hurt thy soul.

Had we to do with a finite compassion, it might be abated by spending itself upon a frequent remission; like as some great river may be drawn dry by many small outlets; but, now that we deal with a God whose mercy is as himself, infinite, it is not the greatness or the number of our offences that can make a difference in his free remissions. That God who hath charged our weak charity *not to be overcome with evil, but to overcome evil with good*, Rom. xii. 21, justly scorneth that we should think his infinite and incomprehensible goodness can be checked with our evil.

It was not without a singular providence that Peter came to our Saviour with that question in his mouth, *Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?* Matt. xviii. 21, that it might fetch from that blessed Son of God that gracious answer for our perpetual direction and comfort: *I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven*, xviii. 22. Lord, if thou wouldest have us sinful men thus indulgent to one another in the case of our mutual offences, what limits can be set to thy mercies in our sins against thee? Be we penitent, thou canst not but be gracious.

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CHAP. IV.

COMFORTS AGAINST WEAKNESS OF GRACE.

SECT. I.—*Comfort from the common condition of all saints.*

THOU complainest of the weakness of grace; some little stirrings thou feelest of God's Spirit within thee, but so feeble, that thou canst not find any solid comfort in them; thou seest others, thou sayest, whose *breasts are full of milk, and their bones moistened with marrow*, Job xxi. 24, while thou languishest under a spiritual leanness and imbecility; thou wantest that vigorous heat of holy affections, and that alacrity in the performance of holy duties, which thou observest in other Christians:—

I love this complaint of thine, my son, and tell thee, that without this thou couldest not be in the way of being happy.

Thinkest thou that those whom thou esteemest more eminent in grace make not the same moan that thou dost? Certainly they never had any grace if they did not complain to have too little. Every man best feels his own wants, and is ready to pass secret censures upon himself for that wherein he is applauded by others.

Even the man after God's own heart can say, *But I am poor and sorrowful*, Ps. lxix. 29. He was a great king when he said so; it was not meanness in outward estate that troubled him, but a spiritual neediness; for he had before, in the same heavenly ditty, professed, *O God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my guiltiness is not hid from thee*, v. 5.

It was an old observation of wise Solomon: *There is that maketh himself rich, and hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches*, Prov. xiii. 7. In this latter rank are many gracious souls, and thine, I hope, for one; who certainly had never been so wealthy in grace, if they had been conceited of greater store. Even in this sense many a saint may say with St. Paul, *When I am weak, then I am strong*, since the very complaint of weakness argues strength; and, on the contrary, an opinion of sufficient grace is an evident conviction of mere emptiness.

SECT. II.—*Comfort from the improvement of weak graces and God's free distribution.*

But suppose thyself so poor as thou pretendest, it is not so much what we have, as how we improve it. How many have we known

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that have grown rich out of a little, whereas others, out of a great stock, have run into debt and beggary! Had that servant in the Gospel who received but one talent employed it to the gain of a second, he had been proportionably as well rewarded as he that with five gained ten.

In our temporal estate we are warned by the wisest man to take heed of making haste to be rich, Prov. xxviii. 20; and the great apostle tells us, that *he that would be rich falls into many temptations*, 1 Tim. vi. 9.

Surely there is no small danger also in affecting to be too suddenly rich in the endowments of the soul. This cannot but be accompanied with the temptation of an unthankful distrust; for on the one side, he that believes makes not haste; and on the other, we cannot be sufficiently thankful for what we have, while we do over eagerly reach after what we have not.

Tell me, thou querulous soul, dost thou not acknowledge what thou hast to be the gift of God? and wilt thou not allow the great Benefactor of heaven to dispense his own favours as he pleaseth? If he think fit rather to fill thy vessel with drops of grace, art thou discontented because he doth not pour out his Spirit upon thee in full vials? If thou have any at all, it is more than he owes thee, more than thou canst repay him. Take what thou hast as an earnest of more, and wait thankfully upon his bounty for the rest. Is it not meet in a free gift to attend the leisure of the donor? What sturdy and ill-mannered beggars are we, if we will not stay at the door till we be served, and grudge at our alms when it comes! Look upon the father of the faithful; thou shalt find him fourscore and six years childless, and at last, after he had got an Ishmael, he must wait fourteen years more for the promised seed; and when he had enjoyed him not much longer than he expected him, he must then sacrifice him to the Giver. Thus, thus, my son, must our faith be exercised in attendance both for time and measure of mercy.

SECT. III.—*Comfort from God's acceptation of truth, not quantity.*

Thy graces are weak; yet if true, discomfort not thyself.

How many weak bodies have we known, which, with careful attendance, have enjoyed better and longer health than those that have had bigger limbs and more brawny arms!

Neither is it otherwise in the soul. Soundness of grace is

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health; increased degrees of grace make up the strength of that spiritual part: if thou have but this health tenderly observed, thou mayest be happy in the enjoying of thy God, although more happy in a comfortable sense of a stronger fruition.

We have to do with a God that stands not so much upon quantity as truth of grace; he knows we can have nothing but what he gives us, and enables us to improve; and where he sees our wills and endeavours not wanting, he is ready to accept and crown his own gift in us: *He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax*, Matt. xii. 20.

SECT. IV.—*Comforts from the variety of God's gifts, and the ages and statures of grace.*

Thou art weak in grace; be not discouraged, my son; there are all ages, all statures in Christ. Shall the child repine that he is not suddenly grown a man? Shall the dwarf quarrel that he is not a giant? Were there a standard of graces, less than which would not be accepted, thou hadst reason to be troubled; but it is so far from that, as that our Saviour hath encharged, *Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven*, Matt. xix. 14.

In some legal oblations, it pleased God to regard time and age. The lamb for the passover and for the peace-offering, the bullock for the sin-offering of Israel, have their date assigned, Lev. iii. 7; iv. 14; and in divers cases he hath called for two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, Lev. i. 14; v. 7, 11; xii. 8; xv. 14. Young turtles and old doves, in the mean while, according to our Jewish doctors, were unlawful to be offered.

But in our spiritual sacrifices all ages are equally accepted. He that is eternal regards not time; he that is infinite and almighty regards not statures. Even the eleventh hour carried the penny as well as the first. And, *Let the weak say, I am strong*, Joel iii. 10.

SECT. V.—*Comfort from the safety of our leisurely progress in grace.*

It troubles thee that thou hast made so slow progress in graces: thy desire is to heavenward, and thou checkest thyself for no more speed:—

It is an happy ambition that carries thee on in that way to blessedness. Quicken thyself what thou mayest with all gracious

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incitations in that holy course, but know, my son, that we may not always hope to go thitherward on the spur. In that passage there are ways that will not admit of haste. How many have we known that by too much forwardness have been cast back in their journey, whether through want of breath, or mistaking their way, or misplacing their steps? I praise thee that it is the desire of thy soul to *run the way of God's commandments*, Ps. cxix. 32, and do encourage thy holy zeal in speeding that holy race, ever praying thou mayest *so run as that thou mayest obtain*, 1 Cor. ix. 24. But withal I must tell thee, that *blessed is the man that doth* but *walk in the law of the Lord*, Ps. cxix. 1. While thou passest on, though but a foot pace, thou art every step nearer to thy glory: so long as thou riddest way, thou art safe. *Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, O God; in whose heart are thy ways; who, passing through the vale of misery, goes on from strength to strength, till he appear before thee, his God, in Sion*, Ps. lxxxiv. 5—7.

SECT. VI.—*Comfort from our good desires and endeavours.*

Thy grace is little, but thou wishest and labourest for more. This is a good beginning of heavenly wealth. He is in a good way to riches that desires to thrive.

Never any holy soul lost her longing. If thy wishes be hearty and serious, thou hast that which thou cravest, or at least, be sure thou shalt have. *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth no man; and it shall be given him*, James i. 5.

Were this condition offered us for worldly riches, who would be poor? If we embrace it not in spiritual, either we distrust the promises, or neglect our own mercies.

In these temporal things, how many have so eagerly followed the chase of the world, that they have overrun it; and while they have greedily swallowed gain, have been choked with it! But in those better blessings, earnestness of desire and fervour of prosecution was never but answered with a gracious impetration.

SECT. VII.—*Comfort from the happiness of an humble poverty.*

Thou art poor in grace, but in an humble self-dejection longest for more; know that an humble poverty is better than a proud fulness. Wert thou poor and proud, there were no hope of thy proficiency; thy false conceit lies in the way of thy thrift, and

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many a one had been gracious if they had not so thought themselves; but now that thou art meaner in thine opinion than in thine estate, who can more justly challenge our Saviour's blessing, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven?* Matt. v. 3.

Thou art weak in grace; it is thine own fault if thou gettest not more strength. Wherefore serves that heavenly food of the word and sacraments but to nourish thy soul to eternal life? Do but eat and digest, and thou canst not but grow stronger. God will not be wanting to thee in an increase of grace, if thou be not wanting to thyself. He offers his Spirit to thee with the means; it is thy sinful neglect, if thou separate them. Thou knowest in whose hands is the staff of bread; pray that he who gives thee the food and the mouth would also give thee appetite, digestion, nourishment.

Sect. VIII.—*An incitement to more caution, and faster adherence to God.*

Thy grace is weak; it concerns thee so much the more to be cautious in avoiding occasions of temptation. He that carries brittle glasses is chary of them, that they take not a knock, whereas strong metal fears no danger. He that hath but a small rush candle walks softly, and keeps off every air.

Thou art weak; thy God is strong. Dost thou not see the feeble child that finds he cannot go alone, how fast he clings to the hand of his mother, more trusting to her help than to his own strength? Do thou so to thy God, and say, with the blessed Psalmist, *Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not*, Ps. xvii. 5. *Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe. Uphold me, according to thy word, that I may live; and let me not be ashamed of my hope*, Ps. cxix. 117, 116. Peter was a bold man, that durst step forth and set his foot upon the liquid face of the waters; but he that ventured to walk there upon the strength of his faith, when he felt the stiff wind, and saw the great billow, began to sink in his weakness; but no sooner had Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him, than he takes courage, and walks now with the same confidence upon the sea that he wont to walk on the land. Together with a check, he receives more supportation from Christ than his own legs could afford him, Matt. xiv. 29—31. Fear no miscarriage through thine own weakness while thou art held up by that strong helper.

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CHAP. V.

COMFORTS AGAINST INFAMY AND DISGRACE.

SECT. I.—*Comfort from the sufferings of the holiest, yea, of Christ himself.*

Next to our body and soul is the care of our reputation, which whoso hath lost is no better than civilly dead.

Thou sufferest under a public infamy; I do not ask how justly. He was a wise man that said it was fit for every good man even to fear a false reproach. A good name is no less wounded for the time with that, than with a just crimination.

This is a sore evil, my son, and such as against which there is no preservative, and for which there is hardly any remedy. Innocence itself is no antidote against evil tongues. Neither greatness nor sanctity can secure any man from unjust calumny. Might that be any ease to thy heart, I could tell thee of the greatest of kings and holiest of saints that have grievously complained of this mischief, and yet were not able to help themselves; thou hast the company of the best that ever the earth bore, if that may be any mitigation of thy misery.

Yea, what do I speak of sinful men, whose greatest purity might be blurred with some imperfections? Look upon the Lord of life, the eternal Son of the ever living God, God clothed in flesh, and see whether any other were his lot while he sojourned in this region of mortality. Dost thou not hear him, for his gracious sociableness, branded as a man *gluttonous, a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners?* Matt. xi. 19. Dost thou not hear him, for his powerful and merciful cure of demoniacs, blazoned for a fellow that *casts out devils through Beelzebub, the prince of the devils?* Matt. xii. 24. Dost thou not hear him slandered to death for treason against Cæsar and blasphemy against God? John xix. 12; Matt. xxvi. 65. Dost thou not hear the multitude say, *He is mad, and hath a devil?* John x. 20. Dost thou not hear him, after this death, charged with imposture? Matt. xxvii. 63. And can there be any worse names than *glutton, drunkard, conjurer, traitor, blasphemer, madman, demoniac, impostor?*

Who now can henceforth think much to be slandered with meaner crimes, when he hears the most holy Son of God, in whose mouth was no guile, and in whom the prince of this world could find nothing, (John xiv. 30,) laden with so heinous calumniations?

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SECT. II.—*Comfort of our recourse to God.*

Thou art smitten with a foul tongue; I marvel not if it go deep into thy soul. That man gave an high praise to his sword that said it was sharper than slander; and if a razor be yet sharper, such did David find the Edomite's tongue, Ps. lii. 2. And if these weapons reach not yet far enough, he found both spears and arrows in the mouths of his traducers, Ps. lvii. 4.

Lo, thou art but in the same case with the man after God's own heart. What shouldest thou do but for David's complaint make use of David's remedy? *I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me. He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up; God shall send forth his mercy and his truth,* Ps. lvii. 2, 3.

Do by thy slander as Hezekiah did by the railing lines of Rabshakeh, spread them before the Lord, and leave thy quarrel in the just hands of that great Arbiter of heaven and earth, who will be sure in his good time to revenge thy wrong, and to clear thine innocence, and will *requite* thee *good for* these causeless *curses*, 2 Sam. xvi. 12.

SECT. III.—*Comfort from the clearness of our conscience.*

"In the mean while," thou sayest, "I stand blemished with an odious aspersion; my name passes through many a foul mouth."

Thou hearest, my son, what some others say: but what dost thou hear from the bird in thy bosom? If thy conscience acquit thee, and pronounce thee guiltless, obdure thy forehead against all the spite of malice. What is ill fame but a little corrupted unsavoury breath? Do but turn away thine ear, that thou receive it not; and what art thou the worse? O, thy weakness, if thou suffer thyself to be blown over by the mere air of some putrefied lungs, which, if thou do but a little decline by shifting thy foot, will soon vanish.

SECT. IV.—*Comfort from the improvement of reason.*

Thou art under ill tongues:—This is an evil proper only unto man. Other creatures are no less subject to disease, to death, to outward violence than he: but none else can be obnoxious to a detraction, sith no other is capable of speech whereout a slander can be formed. They have their several sounds and notes of expression, whereby they can signify their dislike and anger, but

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only man can clothe his angry thoughts with words of offence; so as that faculty, which was given him for an advantage, is depraved to a further mischief. But the same liberal hand of his Creator hath also endued him with a property of reason, which, as it ought to direct his language to others, so also to teach him how to make use of others' language to him; and where he finds it wrongful, either to convince it by a just apology, or to contemn it. If, therefore, thou understandest thyself to lie under an unjust obloquy, have so much of man in thee, as either to confute or despise it.

SECT. V.—*Comfort from the cause of our suffering.*

Thou art shamefully traduced:—I could pity thy suffering; but, withal, give me leave to inquire, not so much what thou sufferest, as for what: if for a good cause, I shall turn my pity into envy. Truth itself told thee, thou art in the way to blessedness. Who can pity thee for that wherein thou hast cause to rejoice? *Blessed are ye, when men revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.* Matt. v. 11, 12. Yea, rather pluck up thy spirits, and take up the resolution of holy Job, *If mine adversary had written a book against me, surely I would take it upon my shoulders, and bind it as a crown to me,* Job xxxi. 35, 36; and say, with the gracious king of Israel, *I will be yet more vile for the Lord,* 2 Sam. vi. 22.

SECT. VI.—*Comfort from our envied virtue.*

Thou art reproached by lewd men: thank thine own virtue, that thou art envied. Wert thou so bad as thy detractors, thou shouldest sit quiet enough. *If ye were of the world,* saith our Saviour, *the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you,* John xv. 19. While the moon sits, no dogs bark at her: it is her shining that opens their mouths. Wert thou either obscure or wicked, thou mightest be safe; but if thou wilt needs be eminently good, look for the lashes of ill tongues. *They think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you,* saith the prime apostle, 1 Peter iv. 4.

It was not without reason that the great musician, in the story,

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struck his scholar, because he saw the multitude applaud his skill; as well knowing, that had he been true to his art, those misjudging ears could not have approved him.

What more excellent instruments had God ever in his Church than the blessed apostles, and what acceptation found they on the earth? *Being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day,* 1 Cor. iv. 13: *We are made a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men,* ver. 9. Complain, if thou canst, of a worse condition than these great ambassadors of the High God; otherwise, resolve, with the Chosen Vessel, to pass cheerfully through honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report, toward the goal of immortality.

SECT. VII.—*Comfort from others' slighting of just reproaches.*

Thou art disgraced through scandalous reports:—It is not mere air that we live by. How many hast thou known that have blown over a just infamy with a careless neglect; pleasing themselves to think that they have thriven even under curses! And shall their guiltiness be entertained with more courage than thine innocence? Let those whose heart is as foul as their name be troubled with deserved censures: do not thou give so much way to malice, as to yield any regard to her misraised suggestions. Thou canst not devise how more to vex a detractor than by contempt: thus thou shalt force Spite, as that wise heathen truly said, to drink off the greatest part of her own poison.

SECT. VIII.—*Comfort from the narrow bounds of infamy.*

Thou art disgraced with an ill fame:—What a poor matter is this! How far dost thou think that sound reacheth? Perhaps, to the next village; perhaps, farther, to the whole shire wherein thou dwellest: it is like the next county never heard thy name; and, if thou look yet farther off, as soon mayest thou be talked of amongst the antipodes as in the neighbouring region. And what a small spot of earth is this to which thy shame is confined! Didst thou know the vast extent of this great world, thou wouldest easily see into how narrow a corner our either glory or dishonour can be pent up; and shouldest confess, how little reason we can have to affect the one or be disheartened with the other.

SECT. IX.—*Comfort from the short life of slander.*

Thou wert wronged with an unjust disgrace:—Have patience a

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while: slanders are not long lived. Truth is the child of time: ere long, she shall appear, and vindicate thee. Wait upon the God of Truth, who shall cause *thy light to break forth as the morning, and thy health to spring forth speedily*, Is. lviii. 8.

But if otherwise, what speakest thou of this shame, which as it is local, so it is momentary, soon passed over in silence and oblivion. There is a shame, my son, which is worthy of thy fear; which is both universal, and before the face of all the world and angels and men, and, beyond the reach of time, eternal. Fear this, and contemn the other.

On the contrary, if Fame should befriend thee so much as to strain her cheeks in sounding thy praises, and should cry thee up for virtuous and eminent every way; alas! how few shall hear her, and how soon is that noise stilled and forgotten! Eccl. ix. 1.

Shortly then, let it be thy main care to demean thyself holily and conscionably before God and men: leave the rest upon God, who shall be sure to make his word good, in spite of men and devils: *The memory of the just shall be blessed; but the name of the wicked shall rot*, Prov. x. 7.

CHAP. VI.

COMFORTS AGAINST PUBLIC CALAMITIES.

SECT. I.—*Comfort from the inevitable necessity of changes; and God's overruling them.*

Thou art afflicted with the public calamities:—So it becomes thee, as a good man, a good Christian, a good patriot. We are not entire peers, but are all limbs of a community, both of church and kingdom. While the whole body suffers, how can we be free?

This should be no news to us. What earthly kingdom or state hath ever enjoyed a constant felicity? These public bodies, like as single persons, have their birth, their vigour, their declinations. Even the white marble of that famous emblem and type of God's Church, after not many centuries of years, felt the dint of time, and mouldered to nothing. It is as much as those heavenly bodies above can do, to avoid change.

Well might we be distracted with these troubles, my son, if we did not well know whence they come; even from a most wise, holy, powerful, just Providence. He that sits in heaven orders these earthly affairs according to the eternal counsel of his will.

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It is that Almighty hand that holds the stern of this tossed vessel, and steers it in that course which he knows best. It is not for us, that are passengers, to meddle with the card or compass. Let that all-skilful Pilot alone with his own work; he knows every rock and shelf that may endanger it, and can cut the proudest billow that threatens it with ease: *It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good*, 1 Sam. iii. 18.

SECT. II.—*The sense and sympathy of common evils.*

Were there no other respects than personal, I cannot blame thee if thy fears strive with thy grief for the public evils: every man's interest is involved in the common: and if the ship sink, what will become of the passengers?

But, withal, there is a kind of inbred sympathy in every good heart, which gives us a share in all others' miseries, and affects us more deeply for them than for our own.

Old indulgent Eli loved his sons too well, and was therefore, no doubt, very sensible of their death; yet that part of the news passed over with some not mortal passion: but when he heard of the ark of God taken, now his neck and his heart were broken together, 1 Sam. iv. 17, 18: and his religious daughter-in-law, though she were delivered upon this report of a son, yet she died in travail of that heavy news; and could live only to say, *Ichabod, The glory is departed from Israel, for the ark of God is taken*, vv. 21, 22: disregarding her new son, when she heard of the loss of her people and of her God.

How many pagans have we read of, that have died resolutely for their country, cheerfully sacrificing themselves to the public! how many, that would die for their country, hating to think of overliving the common ruin! how many that have professed a scorn to be beholden for their lives to their people's murderer!

We shall as soon extinguish both grace and nature as quit this compassionate sense of the common calamities.

SECT. III.—*Comfort from the sure protection of the Almighty.*

Thou grievest for the public distempers:—Mourn not as one without faith. Be sure, *He that keepeth Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.* Wherefore was the holy tabernacle overspread with a strong tent of skins (Exod. xxvi. 7,) but to figure out unto us God's Church sheltered under a sure protection? He that was so curious of the custody of his material temple, by night as well

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as by day, that a sleeping Levite might not escape beating and burning of garments; how careful, do we think, he will ever be of his spiritual and living house!

How unmeet judges are we of his holy proceedings! We are ready to measure his love still by an outward prosperity; than which nothing can be more uncertain. The Almighty goes by other rules, such as are most consonant to his infinite justice and mercy. I am abashed to hear a pagan[d], though no vulgar one, say, "Whatsoever is brought to pass, a wise man thinks ought to be so done, neither goes about to rebuke nature, but finds it best to suffer what he cannot alter." And shall we Christians repine at those seemingly harsh events which we see fall out in God's Church while we are ignorant of his designs, and be ready to bless a thriving profaneness?

Look abroad upon the ancient lot of God's inheritance, and their corrivals in glory: thou shalt see the family of Esau flourishing and renowned; yielding, besides dukes, eight kings of his line, while poor Israel was toiling and sweating in the Egyptian furnaces: yet we know the word to stand inviolable: *The elder shall serve the younger;* and, *Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated.*

What if that great and wise God who works ofttimes by contraries, and brings light out of darkness, have proposed to fetch honour and happiness to his Church out of this sad affliction? Metals are never so bright as when they are scoured; perfumes and spices never so redolent as when they have felt the fire and the pestle. Wilt thou not give the physician leave to make use of his mithridate because there are vipers in the composition? How unworthy art thou of health, if thou wilt not trust the fidelity and skill of the artist in mixing so wholesome a cordial!

SECT. IV.—*Consideration of the justice of God's proceedings.*

Thou art troubled with the public miseries:—Take heed that thy grief be clear of all impiety. Wouldst thou not have God to be just, that is, himself? Wouldst thou not allow it an act of his justice to punish sins? Canst thou deny that our sins have reached up to heaven, and called for judgment? *Why is the living man sorrowful? man suffereth for his sins,* Lam. iii. 39.

I read of a devout man that was instant with God in his prayers,

[d] Sen. Ep. 107. [et quæcunque fiunt debuisse fieri putet, nec velit objurgare naturam; optimum est pati quod emendare non possis.]

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for a nation not far off, and was answered, "Suffer the proud to be humbled." Whether we will suffer it or no, the just God will humble the proud and punish the sinful.

The wonderful patience and infinite justice of the Almighty hath set a stint to the wickedness of every people: *The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full,* saith God to Abraham, Gen. xv. 16: when the measure is once made up, it is time for God to strike; we shall then complain in vain, and too late.

Wouldst thou know, then, what is to be done for the preventing of a destructive vengeance? There is no way under heaven but this, to break off our sins by a seasonable and serious repentance: by the united forces of our holy resolutions and endeavours, to make an head against the overbearing wickedness of the time, and not to suffer it to fill up towards the brim of that fatal ephah, till which time the longsuffering God only threatens and corrects a people, but then he plagues them, and stands upon the necessity of his inviolable justice: *Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?* Jer. v. 9.

Sect. V.—*The remedy, our particular repentance.*

Thou mournest for the common sufferings:—Thou dost well: our tears can never be better bestowed. But the while is not thy hand in them? have not thy sins helped to make up this irritating heap? hast not thou cast in thy symbol into the common shot? May not the times justly challenge thee in part, as accessary to their misery? Begin at home, my son, if thou wish well to the public, and make thine own peace with thy God for thy particular offences. Renew thy covenant with God of a more holy and strict obedience, and then pour out thy prayers and tears for a universal mercy; so shalt thou not only pull away one brand from this consuming fire, but help effectually to quench the common conflagration.

Sect. VI.—*The unspeakable miseries of a civil war.*

Thy heart bleeds to see the woful vastation of civil discord, and the deadly fury of homebred enemies:—

Certainly there is nothing under heaven more ghastly and dreadful than the face of an intestine war; nothing that doth so nearly resemble hell. Woe is me! here is altogether killing, and dying, and torturing, and burning, and shrieks, and cries, and

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ejulations, and fearful sounds, and furious violences, and whatsoever may either cause or increase horror. The present calamity oppresses one; another, fear: one is quivering in death; another trembles to expect it: one begs for life; another will sell it dearer: here, one would rescue one life, and loseth two; there, another would hide himself, where he finds a merciless death: here lies one bleeding, and groaning, and gasping, parting with his soul in extremity of anguish; there, another of stronger spirits kills and dies at once: here, one wrings her hands, and tears her hair, and seeks for some instrument of a self-inflicted death, rather than yield her chaste body to the lust of a bloody ravisher; there, another clings inseparably to a dear husband, and will rather take part of the murderer's sword than let go her last embraces: here, one tortured for the discovery of hid treasure; there, another dying upon the rack out of jealousy.

O that one man, one Christian should be so bloodily cruel to another! O that he, who bears the image of the merciful God, should thus turn fiend to his own flesh and blood! These are terrible things, my son, and worthy of our bitterest lamentations and just fears.

I love the speculation of Seneca's resolutely-wise man[e], that could look upon the glittering sword of an executioner with erected and undazzled eyes; that makes it no matter of difference whether his soul pass out at his mouth or at his throat; but I should more admire the practice. While we carry this clay about us, nature cannot but in the holiest men shrink in at the sight and sense of these tyrannous and tragical acts of death.

Yet even these are the due revenges of the Almighty's punitive justice; so provoked by our sins, as that it may not take up with an easier judgment. Dost thou not see it ordinary with our physicians, when they find the body highly distempered, and the blood foul and inflamed, to order the opening of a vein, and the drawing out of so many ounces as may leave the rest meet for correction? Why art thou overtroubled to see the great Physician of the world take this course with sinful mankind? Certainly, had not this great body, by mis-dieting and wilful disorder, contracted these spiritual diseases under which we languish; had it not impured the blood that runs in these common veins with riot and surfeits, we had never been so miserable as to see these torrents of Christian blood running down our channels. Now yet, as it is, could we

[e] Sen. Ep. 76. [Si erectis oculis gladios micantes videt, &c.]

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bewail and abandon our former wickedness, we might live in hope, that at last this deadly issue might stop and dry up, and that there might be yet left a possibility of a blessed recovery.

SECT. VII.—*The woful miseries of pestilence allayed by consideration of the hand that smites us.*

Thou art confounded with grief to see the pestilence raging in our streets, in so frequent a mortality as breeds a question concerning the number of the living and the dead: that which is wont to abate other miseries heightens this—the company of participants.

It was certainly a very hard and sad option that God gave to king David after his sin of numbering the people; *Choose thee, whether seven years' famine shall come unto thee in thy land? or three months' flight before thine enemies? or three days' pestilence?* 2 Sam. xxiv. 13. We may believe the good king, when we hear him say, *I am in a great strait.* Doubtless so he was: but his wise resolutions have soon brought him out; *Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man.*

He that was to send these evils knew their value, and the difference of their malignity; yet he opposes three days' pestilence to seven years' famine and three months' vanquishment: so much odds he knew there was betwixt the dull activity of man and the quick despatch of an angel.

It was a favour that the angel of death, who in one night destroyed a hundred fourscore and five thousand Assyrians (2 Kings xix. 35), should in three days cut off but seventy thousand Israelites: it was a great mercy it was no worse. We read of one, city shall I call it, or region, of Cairo, wherein eighteen hundred thousand were swept away in one year's pestilence; enow, one would think, to have peopled the whole earth; and in our own chronicles, of so general a mortality, that the living were hardly sufficient to bury the dead.

These are dreadful demonstrations of God's heavy displeasure; but yet there is this alleviation of our misery, that we suffer more immediately from a holy, just, merciful God. The kingly prophet had never made that distinction in his woful choice, if he had not known a notable difference betwixt the sword of an angel and an enemy, betwixt God's more direct and immediate infliction, and that which is derived to us through the malice of men. It was

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but a poor consolation that is given by a victorious enemy to dying Lausus, in the poet: "Comfort thyself in thy death with this, that thou fallest by the hand of great Æneas:" but surely we have just reason to raise comfort to our souls, when the pains of a pestilential death compass us about, from the thought and intuition of that holy and gracious hand under which we suffer; so as we can say, with good Eli, *It is the Lord.* It is not amiss that we call those marks of deadly infection "God's tokens;" such, sure, they are, and ought therefore to call up our eyes and hearts to that Almighty power that sends them, with the faithful resolution of holy Job, *Though thou kill me, yet will I trust in thee.*

It is none of the least miseries of contagious sickness, that it bars us from the comfortable society and attendance of friends; or, if otherwise, repays their love and kind visitation with death. Be not dismayed, my son, with this sad solitude; thou hast company with thee whom none infection can endanger or exclude: there is an invisible Friend, that will be sure to stick by thee so much more closely, by how much thou art more avoided by neighbours, and will make all thy bed in thy sickness, and supply thee with those cordials which thou shouldest in vain expect from earthly visitants.

Indeed, justly do we style this "The sickness," eminently grievous both for the deadliness and generality of the dispersion; yet there is a remedy that can both cure and confine it. Let but every man look well to the plague of his own heart, and the land is healed. Can we, with David, but see the angel that smites us, and erect an altar, and offer to God the sacrifices of our prayers, penitence, obedience, we shall hear him say, *It is enough,* 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. The time was, and that time may not be forgotten, when, in the days of our late sovereign, our mother city was almost desolated with this mortal infection; when *thousands fell at our side, and ten thousands at our right hand,* Ps. xci. 7. Upon the public humiliation of our souls the mercy of the Almighty was pleased to command that raging disease, in the height of its fury, like some headstrong horse in the midst of its career, to stop on the sudden, and to leave us at once, ere we could think of it, both safe and healthful. *This* was *the Lord's doing, and it* was *marvellous in our eyes. Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear,* Is. lix. 1. The same mercy is everlasting, the same remedy certain; be we but penitent, and we cannot be miserable.

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CHAP. VII.

COMFORTS AGAINST LOSS OF FRIENDS.

SECT. I.—*The true value of a friend; and the fault of over-prizing him.*

Thou hast lost thy friend: the sorrow is just; the earth hath nothing more precious than that which thou hast parted with: for what is a friend but a man's self in another skin, a soul divided into two bodies, both which are animated by the same spirit? It is somewhat worse with thee therefore than with a palsied man, whose one half is stricken with a dead kind of numbness; he hath lost but the use of one side of his body; thou the one half of thy soul. Or may I not with better warrant say that a true friend hath, as it were, two souls in one body, his own and his friend's? Sure I am so it was with Jonathan and David: *The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David; and Jonathan loved him as his own soul,* 1 Sam. xviii. 1.

Still, the more goodness, the stronger union. Mere nature can never be so fast a cement of souls as grace; for here the union is wrought by a better Spirit than our own, even that blessed Spirit who styles himself by the name of *love,* 1 John iv. 16.

By how much greater thine affection was, so much heavier is thy loss.

But, let me tell thee, I fear thou art too much accessary to thine own affliction. Didst thou look for this loss? did thy heart say, "What if we should part?" Didst thou not over-enjoy this blessing whilst thou hadst it? Surely these are no small disadvantages; as every other evil, so this especially is aggravated by our unexpectation. Neither hadst thou been so oppressed with this sorrow if thou hadst foreseen it, and met it on the way. It is our weak inconsideration, if we do so welcome these earthly comforts, not as guests, but as inmates, and, as some that are importunately hospitable, so entertain our friends that we cannot abide to give them leave to depart; whereas we ought, according to the wise advice of our Seneca[f], not much abluding from the counsel of that blessed apostle with whom he is said to have interchanged letters, so to possess them as those that make account to forego them, and so forego them, as if we possessed them still, 1 Cor. vii. 30, 31.

[f] Sen. Ep. 63.

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SECT. II.—*The true ground of an undefeasible enjoying of our friends.*

Thou art grieved for the loss of a dear friend: take heed lest thy love had too much of the man, and too little of God. All blessings, as they come down from the Father of mercies, so should be enjoyed in him; and if we enjoy them as in themselves, our love begins to degenerate into carnal.

It is a sure rule, that all love that depends upon a thing affected, when that thing ceaseth, then the love ceaseth; as he that loves a face only for beauty, when that beauty is defaced by deformity presently cools in his affection: he that respects a man for his bounty only, disregards him when he sees him impoverished. Didst thou value thy friend only for his wit, for his ready compliances, for his kind offices? all these are now lost, and thy love with them; but if thou didst affect him for eminence of grace, for the sake of that God that dwelt in him, now thy love is not, cannot be lost, because thou still enjoyest that God in whom thou lovedst him. Comfort thyself, therefore, in that God in whom he was thine, and yield him cheerfully into those hands that lent him thee.

SECT. III.—*The rarity and trial of true friends.*

Thou hast lost a true friend: that jewel was worthy to be so much more precious by how much more rare it is.

The world affords friends enow, such as they are; friends of the purple, as Tertullian calls them; friends of the basket, as the poet; such as love thy loaves and fishes, and thee for them. *Wealth makes many friends*, saith the Wise Man, Prov. xiv. 20; xix. 4. But where is the man that loves thee for thyself; that loves thy virtue, and thee for it, divested of all by-respects? While there is honey in thy gallypot, the wasps and flies will be buzzing about it; but which of them cares to light upon an empty vessel? Was he so much thine, that he would not be set off by thine adversity? did he honour thee when thou wert despised of the world? did he follow thee with applause while thou wert hooted at by the multitude? would he have owned thee if he had found thee stripped and wounded in the wilderness? Such a friend is worthy of thy tears.

But take heed thy love prove not envious. If thy God hath thought him fitter for the society of saints and angels, dost thou repine at his happiness? Thou hast lost his presence; he is advanced to the beatifical presence of the King of glory: whether is thy loss or his gain the greater?

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SECT. IV.—*It is but a parting, not a loss.*

Thou hast lost thy friend; say rather, thou hast parted with him. That is properly lost which is past all recovery, which we are out of hope to see any more. It is not so with this friend thou mournest for: he is but gone home a little before thee; thou art following him: you two shall meet in your Father's house, and enjoy each other more happily than you could have done here below.

How just is that charge of the blessed apostle, that we should *not mourn as men without hope for those that do but sleep in Jesus!* 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14. Did we think their souls vanished into air, as that heathen poet profanely expresses it, and their bodies resolved into dust, without all possibility of reparation, we might well cry out our eyes for the utter extinction of those we loved; but if *they do* but *sleep, they shall do well,* John xi. 12. Why are we impatient for their silent reposal in the bed of their grave, when we are assured of their awaking to glory?

SECT. V.—*The loss of a virtuous wife mitigated.*

Thou hast lost a dear wife, *the wife of thy youth, the desire of thine eyes,* Prov. v. 18; Is. liv. 6; Ezek. xxiv. 16. Did ye not take one another upon the terms of re-delivery when you should be called for? Were you not in your very knitting put in mind of your dissolution—"Till death us do part?"

Was she virtuous? Knowest thou not that there was a pre-contract betwixt thy Saviour and her soul ere thou couldst lay any claim to her body? and canst thou now grudge his just challenge of his own? wilt thou not allow him to call for a consummation of that happy match? Didst thou so over-love her outside, that thou wouldst not have her soul glorious? If thou lovedst her not as a man, but as a Christian, envy her not to that better Husband above, who gives her no less dowry than immortality.

SECT. VI.—*The mitigation of the loss of a dear and hopeful son.*

Thy son is dead; what marvel is it, that a mortal father hath begot a mortal son? Marvel rather that thyself hath lived to have or to lose a son. We lie open to so many deaths, that our very subsistence is almost miraculous.

Thou hast lost a piece of thy flesh; for what are our children

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but as colonies deduced from our own flesh? yea, rather ourselves made up in other models. This loss cannot but go near thee.

But, tell me, what was the disposition of the son thou mournest for?

If he were graceless and debauched, as thy shame, so thy sorrow should die with him; set the hopes thou mightest have had of his reclaiming against the fears of his continuing and increasing wickedness, and thou couldst have made no other present account but of dishonour and discomfort. If it be sad that he is taken away in his wildness, it had been more heavy that he would have added to the heap of his sin, and therein to his torments.

If he were gracious, he had a better Father than thyself, whose interest was more in him than thine; and if that heavenly Father have thought good to prefer him to a crown of immortal glory, why shouldst thou be afflicted with his advancement? Why shouldst thou not rather rejoice that thy loins have helped to furnish heaven with a saint? Were it put to thy choice, that thy son might be called off from his blessed rest, and return to his former earthly relations, couldst thou be so injurious in thy self-love as to wish the misery of so disadvantageous a change to that soul, which, as it was never of thy production, so it were pity it should be at thy disposing? Rather labour to have thine own soul so disposed, that it may be ready to follow him into those blessed mansions, and that it may love and long for heaven so much more, for that one piece of thee is there beforehand.

CHAP. VIII.

COMFORTS AGAINST POVERTY, AND LOSS OF OUR ESTATE.

SECT. I.—*The fickle nature of these earthly goods.*

THOU art driven into want, and, that which is worse, out of abundance: those evils that we have been inured to, as being bred up with us from our cradle, are grown so familiar, that we are little moved with their presence; but those into which we fall suddenly, out of an outward felicity of estate, are ready to overwhelm us. Let thy care be, not to want those better riches which shall make thy soul happy, and thou shalt not be too much troubled with the loss of this trivial and perishing stuff.

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Had these been true goods, they could not have been lost; for that good that is at last capable of loss, as it is unsatisfying in the time of an unperfect and unsure fruition, so in losing, it turns evil. Didst thou not know that *riches have wings?* Prov. xxiii. 5; and what use is there of wings, if not to fly? If another man's violence shall clip those wings, even this very clipping is their flight. Set thy heart upon that excellent and precious wealth which can never be taken from thee—which shall never leave thee, nor thou it—thou shalt easily slight these poor losses.

As these were not goods, so they were not thine. Here thou foundest them, and here thou leavest them. 1 Tim. vi. 7. What hadst thou but their use? Neither can they be otherwise thine heir's, whom thou leavest behind thee. I am ashamed to hear the heathen philosopher say, "All that is mine, I carry about me," when many of us Christians are ready to hug those things, as most ours, which are without ourselves. It was an unanswerable question which God moves to the rich man in the parable, upon the parting with his soul, *Then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?* Luke xii. 20. Perhaps a stranger's; perhaps, as in case of undisposed lands, the occupant's; perhaps a false executor's; perhaps an enemy's. Call that thine that thou shalt be sure to carry away with thee, that shall either accompany thy soul in its last passage or follow it: such shall be thy holy graces, thy charitable works, thy virtuous actions, thine heavenly dispositions. Lo, these are the treasures which thou shalt *lay up for thyself in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt; where thieves do not break through nor steal.* Matt. vi. 20.

Sect. II.—*Consideration that they are not ours, but lent us.*

Thou hast lost thy goods: may I not rather say, Thou hast restored them? He parted with more than thou, that said—*The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken,* Job i. 21.

Lo, whether it were by way of patrimony, or by way of providence and industry, the Lord gave it; and whether it were by the hands of Chaldeans or Sabeans, the Lord hath taken it. The Lord is in both; he did but give and take his own. Is it not just so with thee? What reason hast thou then to complain?

Or, may I not yet rather say, it was not given, but lent thee for a while, till it were called for? and dost thou grudge to restore what thou borrowedst?

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Nay, that thou mayest have yet less claim to this pelf, was it not only left in thy hand by the owner, to employ for his use, till he should re-demand it with the increase? What is it to thee, but to improve and account for? If others have taken off thy charge, while they have spoiled, they have eased thee.

SECT. III.—*That the right valuation of riches is in the mind.*

Thy wealth is gone; hast thou necessaries left? Be thankful for what thou hast; forget what thou hadst.

Hadst thou had more, thou couldst have made use of no more than nature calls for; the rest could but have lien by thee for sight, for readiness of employment.

Do but forbear the thought of superfluities, and what art thou the worse? Perhaps thy fare is coarser, thy dishes fewer, thy utensils meaner, thy clothes homelier, thy train shorter: what of this? How is thy mind affected? Contentment stands not in quantities nor in qualities, but in the inward disposition of the heart. That alone can multiply numbers and raise prices; that alone can turn honest friezes into rich velvets, pulse into delicates; and can make one attendant many officers.

Wise Seneca tells thee truly[f], that the true mould of wealth is our body, as the last is of the shoe: if the shoe be too big for the foot, it is but troublesome and useless: and how poor an answer would it be of the cordwainer to say, that he had leather good store! It is fitness which is to be regarded here, not largeness.

Neither is this any other than the charge of the blessed apostle: *Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content,* 1 Tim. vi. 8. And if we have no more, we shall be but as we were, as we shall be: *for we brought nothing into the world, neither shall we carry any thing out,* vers. 7.

SECT. IV.—*It may be good for us to be held short.*

Thou hast parted with thy wealth, perhaps for thine own good. How many have we known, that have been cumbered with plenty, like as the ostrich or bustard with bulk of body, so as they could not raise their thoughts to spiritual things, who, when their weight hath been taken off, have mounted nimbly towards their heaven! How many have we known, that had lost their lives, if, with the

[f] Sen. Ep. 107.

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philosopher, they had not foregone their gold! Yea, how many that had lost their precious souls! The whole vessel had sunk in this boisterous sea, if the luggage of this earthly freight had not been cast overboard. And why art thou so troubled to lose that which might have undone thee in the keeping?

Sect. V.—*The danger of abundance.*

Thou hadst wealth; hast thou not parted with that for which many a man hath been the worse? worse both in body and soul, and by which never any soul was better? Have we not seen many good cornfields marred with rankness? have we not seen many a good bough split with the weight of too much fruit? Whereas, those fields, had they been either thinner sown, or seasonably eaten down, had yielded a fair crop; and those boughs, had they been but moderately laden, had outlived many autumns.

Dost thou not hear thy Saviour say, *How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!* Mark x. 23. Art thou troubled that there is a rub removed out of thy way to happiness? that the bunch of the camel is taken off, if yet thou mayest pass through the eye of the needle?

Sect. VI.—*The cares that attend wealth.*

Thou hadst riches: but hadst thou not cares to boot? Surely else thou hast fared better than all thy neighbours. Nobody but thyself could ever handle these roses without pricking his fingers.

He[g] was famous amongst the Jewish doctors whose rule it was, "He that multiplies riches multiplies cares:" and our blessed Saviour hath coupled these two together, *the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches*, Mark iv. 19.

We have heard of one who was glad to be rid of his lately-found bag, that he might sleep and sing again. He was noted and envied at Rome for his wealth, which could experimentally say, "The poor man laughs more often and more heartily than the rich[h];" and tells us, that "outward felicity is an unquiet thing, never ceasing to vex itself[i]."

Thy sides are now rid of these thorns; why dost thou grumble at thine own ease?

[g] Rab. Gamaliel.

[h] Sen. Ep. 80. [sæpius pauper et fidelius ridet.]

[i] Epist. 36. [res est inquieta felicitas ipsa se exagitat.]

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SECT. VII.—*The imperiousness of ill-used wealth.*

Thou lately possessedst great riches; yea, mayest thou not rather say, thou wert possessed of them?

That wise Roman truly observed, that "many a one hath wealth, as we are wont to say a man hath taken an ague, when indeed the ague hath taken him, and holds him in a painful manner[k]." The truth is, many a man's wealth is his master, and keeps him under hard conditions, not allowing him sufficient diet, not competent rest, not any recreation. If thou wert thus a drudge to thine estate, thou art now thine own man; enjoy thy liberty, and, together with thy patience, be thankful.

SECT. VIII.—*Consideration of the causes and means of impoverishing us.*

Thou art very poor: who made thee so?

If thine own negligence, laziness, improvidence, unthriftiness, rash engagements, thou hadst reason to bear that burthen which thou hast pulled upon thine own shoulders; and if thou be forced to make many hard faces under the load, yet, since thy own will hath brought upon thee this necessity, even the necessity should move thy will to trudge away as lightly and as fast as thou mayest with that pressing weight.

If the mere oppression and injury of others, thou shalt the more comfortably run away with this cross, because thine own hand hath not been guilty of imposing it. How easy is it for thee here to see God's hand chastising thee by another man's sin! and more to be grieved at the sin of that other's wrong, than at thine own smart!

How sad a thing it is for any good soul to see brethren a prey to each other! that neighbours should be like the reed and the brake set near together, whereof the one starves the other! that we should have daily occasion to renew that woful comparison of our Bromyard[l] betwixt the friends and enemies of Christ, that Jews do not suffer beggars, that Christians make beggars!

In the mean time, if God think fit to send poverty to thy door upon the message of men, bid it welcome for the sake of him that sent it, and entertain it, not grudgingly, for its own sake, as that which, if it be well used, will repay thee with many blessings;

[k] Ep. 119. [Febris illum tenet—eodem modo, &c.]

[l] Brom. V. Eleemosyna. [Art. viii. Illi suos mendicare non permittunt, Isti vero necessitant.]

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the blessings of quiet rest, safe security, humble patience, contented humility, contemptuous valuation of these earthly things; all which had balked thy house in a prosperous condition.

SECT. IX.—*The examples of those who have affected poverty.*

Thou art stripped of thy former conveniences for diet, for lodging, for attendance: how many have purposely affected to do that out of choice which is befallen thee upon need; some out of the grounds of philosophy, others of religion!

Attalus the philosopher might have lien soft, yet he calls for and praises the bed and pillow that will not yield to his body[m]; and Nero's great and rich master brags of his usual dining without a table[n].

What should I tell then of the Pharisees' uneasy couches and penal garments? of the mats of the elect Manichees? of the austere usages of the ancient eremitical Christians? their rigorous abstinences, their affamishing meals, their nightly watchings, their cold ground-lyings, their sharp disciplines?

Thou art in ease and delicacy in comparison of these men, who voluntarily imposed upon themselves these hardnesses which thou wouldest be loath to undergo from others' cruelty.

It was a strange word of Epicurus the philosopher, not savouring of more contentment than presumption: "Give us but water, give us but barley-meal, and we shall vie with Jupiter himself for happiness[o]:" and if this ethnic, who was in an ill name for affectation of pleasure, could rest so well pleased with a poor mess of water-gruel, what a shame were it for us Christians not to be well apaid with a much larger, though but homely, provision!

CHAP. IX.

COMFORTS AGAINST IMPRISONMENT.

SECT. I.—*Consideration of the nature and power of true liberty.*

Thou art restrained of thy liberty: I cannot blame thee to be sensible of the affliction. Liberty is wont to hold competition for dearness with life itself; yea, how many have lost their life to purchase their liberty!

But take heed lest thou be either mistaken or guilty of thine

[m] Sen. Epist. 108. [culcitram quæ resisteret corpori.]

[n] Epist. 83. [et sine mensa prandium. Seneca, who calls himself Psychrolutas.]

[o] Epic. in Ep. Sen. 110. [Habeamus a quam habeamus polentam, &c.]

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own complaint; for certainly thou canst not be bereaved of thy liberty except thou wilt. Liberty is a privilege of the will; will is a sovereign power, that is not subject to either restraint or constraint. Hast thou therefore a freedom within, a full scope to thine own thoughts? It is not the cooping up of these outward parts that can make thee a prisoner.

Thou art not worthy of the name of a man if thou thinkest this body to be thyself; and that is only it which human power can reach unto.

Besides, art thou a Christian? then thou hast learned to submit thy will to God's: God's will is declared in his actions; for, sure, what he doth, that he wills to do. If his will be then to have thee restrained, why should it not be thine? and if it be thy will to keep in, what dost thou complain of restraint?

SECT. II.—*The sad objects of a free beholder.*

Thou art restrained: Is it such a matter that thou art not suffered to come abroad? How ill hast thou spent thy time, if thou hast not laid up matter both of employment and contentment in thine own bosom!

And what such goodly pleasure were it for thee to look over the world, and to behold those objects which thine eye shall there meet withal: here men fighting, there women and children wailing; here plunders, there riots; here fields of blood, there towns and cities flaming; here some scuffling for patrimonies, there others wrangling for religion; here some famishing for want, there others abusing their fulness; here schisms and heresies, there rapines and sacrileges! What comfortable spectacles these are to attract or please our eyes! Thy closeness frees thee from these sights, the very thought whereof is enough to make a man miserable; and, instead of them, presents thee only with the face of thy keeper, which custom and necessity hath acquitted from thy first horror.

SECT. III.—*Comfort from the invisible company that cannot be kept from us.*

Thou art shut up close within four walls, and all company is secluded from thee: content thyself, my son: God and his angels cannot be kept out; thou hast better company in thy solitude than thy liberty afforded thee. The jollity of thy freedom robbed thee of the conversation of these spiritual companions, which only

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can render thee happy; they which before were strangers to thee are now thy guests, yea, thy inmates, if the fault be not thine, to dwell with thee in that forced retiredness.

What if the light be shut out from thee? this cannot hinder thee from seeing the Invisible: *The darkness hideth not from thee,* saith the Psalmist; *but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee,* Ps. cxxxix. 12.

Yea, I doubt not to say, God hath never been so clearly seen as in the darkest dungeons; for the outward light of prosperity distracts our visive beams, which are strongly contracted in a deep obscurity. He must descend low, and be compassed with darkness, that would see the glorious lights of heaven by day; they ever shine, but are not seen save in the night.

May thine eyes be blessed with this invisible sight, thou shalt not envy those that glitter in court, and that look daily upon the faces of kings and princes; yea, though they could see all that the tempter represented to the view of our Saviour upon the highest mountain, *all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them.*

SECT. IV.—*Comfort from the inward disposition of the prisoner.*

Thou art forced to keep close:—But with what disposition, both of mind and body? If thou hadst an unquiet and burdened soul, it were not the open and free air that could refresh thee; and if thou have a clear and light heart, it is not a strict closeness that can dismay thee: thy thoughts can keep thee company and cheer up thy solitariness. If thou hadst an unsound and painful body; as if thou wert laid up of the gout, or some rupture, or luxation of some limb, thou wouldest not complain to keep in; thy pain would make thee insensible of the trouble of thy confinement: but if God have favoured thee with health of body, how easily mayest thou digest an harmless limitation of thy person!

A wise man, as Laurentius the presbyter observed well, doth much while he rests: his motions are not so beneficial as his sitting still. So mayest thou bestow the hours of thy close retiredness, that thou mayest have cause to bless God for so happy an opportunity.

How memorable an instance hath our age yielded us of an eminent person[p], to whose encagement we are beholden, besides many philosophical experiments, for that noble History of the World

[p] Sir Walter Raleigh.

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which is now in our hands! The Court had his youthful and freer times; the Tower his later age: the Tower reformed the Court in him, and produced those worthy monuments of art and industry which we should have in vain expected from his freedom and jollity. It is observed that shining wood, when it is kept within doors, loseth its light. It is otherwise with this and many other active wits, which had never shined so much if not for their closeness.

SECT. V.—*Comfort from the willing choice of retiredness in some persons.*

Thou art close shut up:—I have seen anachorites that have sued for this as a favour which thou esteemest a punishment; and having obtained it, have placed merit in that wherein thou apprehendest misery. Yea, our history tells us of one, who, when the church, whereto his cell was annexed, was on fire, would not come out to live; but would die and lie buried under the ashes of that roof where his vow had fixed him. Suppose thou doest that out of the resolution of thine own will, which thou doest out of another's necessitating, and thou shalt sit down contented with thy lot.

SECT. VI.—*Comfort from the causes of imprisonment.*

Thou art imprisoned:—Wise men are wont, in all actions and events, to inquire still into the causes. Wherefore dost thou suffer?

Is it for thy fault? Make thou thy gaol God's correction-house for reforming of thy misdeeds. Remember and imitate Manasseh, the evil son of a good father; who, upon true humiliation by his just imprisonment, found an happy expiation of his horrible idolatries, murders, witchcrafts; whose bonds brought him home to God and himself.

Is it for debt? Think not to pay those who have intrusted thee with a lingering durance, if there be power in thine hand for a discharge: there is fraud and injustice in this closeness; fear thou a worse prison if thou wilt needs wilfully live and die in a just indebtment, when thon mayest be at once free and honest: stretch thine ability to the utmost to satisfy others with thine own impoverishing. But if the hand of God hath humbled and disabled thee, labour what thou canst to make thy peace with thy creditors: if they will needs be cruel, look up with patience to the hand of that God who thinks fit to afflict thee with their unreasonableness,

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and make the same good use of thy sufferings which thou wouldest do from the immediate hand of thy Creator.

If it be for a good cause, rejoice in this tribulation, and be holily proud and glad, with the blessed apostles, that thou art *counted worthy to suffer shame and bonds for the name of the Lord Jesus,* Acts v. 41; for every just cause is his: neither is he less a martyr that suffers for his conscience in any of God's commandments, than he who suffers for matter of faith and religion. Remember that cordial word of thy Saviour, *Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

In such a prison thou shalt be sure to find good company. There thou shalt find Joseph, Micaiah, Jeremiah, John Baptist, Peter, Paul and Silas, and (what should I think of the poll?) all the holy martyrs and confessors of Jesus Christ, from the first plantation of the Gospel to this present day. Repent thee, if thou canst, to be thus matched, and choose rather to violate a good conscience and be free, than to keep it under a momentary restraint.

Sect. VII.—*The goodness of retiredness, and the partnership of the soul's imprisonment.*

Thou art a prisoner:—Make the best of thy condition: close air is warmer than open: and how ordinarily do we hear birds sing sweeter notes in their cages than they could do in the wood! It shall be thine own fault if thou be not bettered by thy retiredness.

Thou art a prisoner:—so is thy soul in thy body: there not restrained only, but fettered; yet complains not of the straitness of these clay walls or the weight of these bonds, but patiently waits for an happy gaol-delivery. So do thou attend with all long-suffering the good hour of the pleasure of thy God. Thy period is set, not without a regard to thy good; yea, to thy best. He, in whose hand are all times, shall find, and hath determined a fit time to free both thy body from these outward prison-walls, and thy soul from this prison of thy body; and to restore both body and soul *from the bondage of corruption to the glorious liberty of the sons of God.* Rom. viii. 21.

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CHAP. X.

COMFORTS AGAINST BANISHMENT.

SECT. I.—*Comfort from the universality of a wise man's country.*

Thou art banished from thy country: beware, lest in thy complaining thou censure thyself. A wise man's country is everywhere. What such relation hath the place wherein thou wert born to thy present being? What more than the time wherein thou wert born? What reason hast thou to be more addicted to the region wherein thou fellest, than to the day of the week, or hour of the day in which thou salutedst the light? What are times and places of our birth but unconcerning circumstances? Wherever thou farest well, thou mayest either find or make thy country.

"But," thou sayest, "there is a certain secret property in our native soil that draws our affection to it, and ties our hearts to it, not without a pleasing kind of delight, whereof no reason can be yielded; so as we affect the place, not because it is better than others, but it is because it is our own[q]. Ulysses doth no less value the rocky soil of his hard and barren Ithaca, than Agamemnon doth the noble walls of his rich and pleasant Mycenæ."

I grant this relation hath so powerful an influence upon our hearts naturally as is pretended; yet such a one as is easily checked with a small unkindness. How many have we known, who, upon an actual affront, not of the greatest, have diverted their respects from their native country; and out of a strong alienation of mind have turned their love into hostility! We shall not need to seek far for histories: our times and memories will furnish us too well. Do we not see those who have sucked the breasts of our common mother, upon a little dislike, to have spit in her face? Can we not name our late homebred compatriots, who, upon the disrelish of some displeasing laws, have flown off from their country, and suborned treasons, and incited foreign princes to our invasion? So as thou seest this natural affection is not so ardent in many but that it may be quenched with a mean discontentment. If therefore there were no other ground of thine affliction, thy sorrow is not so deeprooted but that it may be easily pulled up.

[q] Sen. Ep. 66. [Nemo enim patriam quia magna est amat sed quia sua.]

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SECT. II.—*Comfort from the benefit of self-conversation.*

"It is not the air or earth," that thou standest upon: it is the company," thou sayest, "from which it is a kind of death to part. I shall leave all acquaintance and conversation, and be cast upon strange faces and languages that I understand not: my best entertainment will be solitude, my ordinary, inhospitality."

What dost thou affright thyself, my son, with these bugs of needless terror? He is not worthy of the name of a philosopher, much less of a Christian divine, that hath not attained to be absolute in himself; and which way soever he is cast, to stand upon his own bottom; and that, if there were no other men left in the world, could not tell how to enjoy himself. It is that within us whereby we must live and be happy: some additions of complacency may come from without: sociable natures, such is man's, seek and find pleasure in conversation; but if that be denied, sanctified spirits know how to converse comfortably with their God and themselves.

SECT. III.—*Examples of those holy ones that have abandoned society.*

How many holy ones of old have purposely withdrawn themselves from the company of men, that they might be blessed with an invisible society; that have exchanged cities for deserts houses for caves, the sight of men for beasts; that their spiritual eyes might be fixed upon those better objects which the frequence of the world held from them! Necessity doth but put thee into that estate which their piety affected.

"O! but to be driven to forsake parents, kinsfolk, friends, how sad a case must it needs be! What is this other than a perfect distraction? What are we but pieces of our parents? And what are friends, but parts of us? What is all the world to us without these comforts?"

When thou hast said all, my son, what is befallen thee, other than it pleased God to enjoin the father of the faithful—*Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, into a land that I will show thee?* Gen. xii. 1. Lo, the same God, by the command of authority, calls thee to this succession. If thou wilt show thyself worthy to be the son of such a father, do that in an humble obedience to God, which thou art urged to do by the compulsion of men.

But what so grievous a thing is this? Dost thou think to find

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God where thou goest? Dost thou make full account of his company both all along the way and in the end of thy journey? Hath not He said, who cannot fail, *I will not leave thee nor forsake thee?* Certainly, he is not worthy to lay any claim to a God, that cannot find parents, kindred, friends in Him alone.

Besides, He that of very stones could raise up children unto Abraham, how easily can he of inhospitable men raise up friends to the sons of Abraham! Only labour thou to inherit that faith wherein he walked; that alone shall free-denizen thee in the best of foreign states, and shall entertain thee in the wildest deserts.

SECT. IV.—*The advantage that hath been made of removing.*

Thou art cast upon a foreign nation: Be of good cheer: we know that flowers, removed, grow greater; and some plants, which were but unthriving and unwholesome in their own soil, have grown both safe and flourishing in other climates. Had Joseph been ever so great if he had not been transplanted into Egypt? Had Daniel and his three companions of the captivity ever attained to that honour in their native land? How many have we known, that have found that health in a change of air which they could not meet with at home! In Africa, the south wind clears up, and the north is rainy. Look thou up still to that hand which hath translated thee: await his good pleasure: be thou no stranger to thy God, it matters not who are strangers unto thee.

SECT. V.—*The right that we have in any country, and in God.*

Thou art a banished man:—How canst thou be so, when thou treadest upon thy Father's ground? *The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness of it.* In his right, wherever thou art, thou mayest challenge a spiritual interest: *All things*, saith the apostle, *are yours; and you are Christ's; and Christ is God's.* 1 Cor. iii. 21, 23. No man can challenge thee for a stranger that is not thy Father's child.

Thine exile separates thee from thy friends:—This were no small affliction, if it might not be abundantly remedied. That was a true word of Laurentius, that "where two faithful friends are met, God makes up a third." But it is no less true, that where one faithful spirit is, there God makes up a second. One God can more than supply a thousand friends.

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SECT. VI.—*The practice of voluntary travel.*

Thy banishment bereaves thee of the comfort of thy wonted companions:—Would not a voluntary travel do as much? Dost thou not see thousands, that do willingly, for many years, change their country for foreign regions; taking long farewells of their dear friends and comrades: some, out of curiosity; some, out of a thirst after knowledge; some out of a covetous desire of gain? What difference is there betwixt thee and them, but that their exile is voluntary, thy travel constrained?

And who are then these whom thou art so sorry to forego? Dost thou not remember what Crates the philosopher said to a young man that was beset with parasitical friends—"Young man," said he, "I pity thy solitude?" Perhaps thou mayest be more alone in such society than in the wilderness; such conversation is better lost than continued. If thou canst but get to be well acquainted with thyself, thou shalt be sorry that thou wert no sooner solitary.

SECT. VII.—*All are pilgrims.*

Thou art out of thy country:—Who is not so? We are all *pilgrims* together with thee. 1 Pet. ii. 11; Heb. xi. 13. *While we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord,* 2 Cor. v. 6. Miserable are we, if our true home be not above. That is the *better country* which we seek, *even an heavenly,* Heb. xi. 16: and thither thou mayest equally direct thy course in whatsoever region. This centre of earth is equidistant from the glorious circumference of heaven: if we may once meet there, what need we make such difference in the way?

CHAP. XI.

COMFORTS AGAINST THE LOSS OF THE SENSES OF SIGHT AND HEARING.

SECT. I.—*Comfort from the two inward lights, of reason and faith.*

Thou hast lost thine eyes: a loss which all the world is uncapable to repair. Thou art hereby condemned to a perpetual darkness: for, *The light of the body is the eye; and if the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!* Matt. v. 22, 23:—

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Couldest thou have foreseen this evil, thou hadst anticipated this loss by weeping out those eyes for grief, which thou must forego.

There are but two ways by which any outward comfort can have access to thy soul—the eye and the ear: one of them is now foreclosed for ever.

Yet know, my son, thou hast two other inward eyes, that can abundantly supply the want of these of thy body—the eye of reason and the eye of faith: the one as a man; the other, as a Christian.

Answerable whereunto there is a double light apprehended by them—rational and divine: Solomon tells thee of the one; *The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly*, Prov. xx. 27: the beloved disciple tells thee of the other; *God is light; and we walk in the light, as he is in the light*, 1 John i. 5, 7.

Now these two lights are no less above that outward and visible light whereof thou art bereaved, than that light is above darkness. If therefore by the eye of reason thou shalt attain to the clear sight of intelligible things, and by the eye of faith to the sight of things supernatural and divine, the improvement of these better eyes shall make a large amends for the lack of thy bodily sight.

SECT. II.—*The supply of better eyes.*

Thy sight is lost:—Let me tell thee what Anthony the Hermit, whom Ruffinus doubts not to style *blessed*[r], said to learned, though blind, Didymus of Alexandria: "Let it not trouble thee, O Didymus, that thou art bereft of carnal eyes; for thou lackest only those eyes which mice and flies and lizards have: but rejoice that thou hast those eyes which the angels have; whereby they see God; and by which thou art enlightened with a great measure of knowledge." Make this good of thyself; and thou shalt not be too much discomforted with the absence of thy bodily eyes.

SECT. III.—*The better object of our inward sight.*

Thine eyes are lost:—The chief comfort of thy life is gone with them: *The light is sweet*, saith Solomon; *and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun*, Eccl. xi. 7. Hath not God done this purposely, that he might set thee off from all earthly

[r] Ruffinus Hist. l. ii. c. 7. [Paris. 1580. p. 236.]

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objects, that thou mightest so much the more intentively fix thyself upon him, and seek after those spiritual comforts which are to be found in a better light?

Behold, the sun is the most glorious thing that the bodily eyes can possibly see: thy spiritual eyes may see Him that made that goodly and glorious creature, and therefore must needs be infinitely more glorious than what he made. If thou canst now see him the more, how hast thou but gained by thy loss?

Sect. IV.—*The ill offices done by the eyes.*

Thou art become blind:—Certainly, it is a sore affliction. The men of Jabesh-Gilead offered to comply with the tyrant of the Ammonites so far as to serve him; but when he required the loss of their right eyes as a condition of their peace, they will rather hazard their lives in an unequal war, 1 Sam. xi. 1—3, as if servitude and death were a less mischief than one eye's loss. How much more of both! for though one eye be but *testis singularis*, yet the evidence of that is as true as that of both; yea, in some cases more; for when we would take a perfect aim, we shut one eye, as rather an hinderance to an accurate information. Yet, for ordinary use, so do we esteem each of these lights, that there is no wise man but would rather lose a limb than an eye. Although I could tell thee of a certain man, not less religious than witty, who, when his friends bewailed the loss of one of his eyes, asked them, whether they wept for the eye which he had lost, or the eye which remained? "Weep rather," said he, "for the enemy which stays behind, than for the enemy that is gone[s]."

Lo, this man looked upon his eyes with eyes different from other men's; he saw them as enemies, which others see as officious servants, as good friends, as dear favourites. Indeed, they are any or all of these according as they are used; good servants, if they go faithfully on the errands we send them, and return us true intelligence; good friends, if they advise and invite us to holy thoughts; enemies, if they suggest and allure us to evil.

If thine eyes have been employed in these evil offices to thy soul, God hath done that for thee which he hath in a figurative sense enjoined thee to do to thyself: *If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it out from thee; for it is better for thee*

[s] Brom. v. *Sensus.* [Art. iv. Inimicum secum morantem quam recedentem.]

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that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell, Matt. v. 29.

SECT. V.—*Freedom from temptations by the eyes, and from sorrows.*

Thou hast lost thine eyes, and together with them much earthly contentment; but withal thou art hereby freed of many temptations. Those eyes were the inlets of sin, yea, not only the mere passages by which it entered, but busy agents in the admission of it, the very panders of lust for the debauching of the soul. How many thousands are there, who, on their death-beds, upon the sad recalling of their guilty thoughts, have wished they had been born blind! So as, if now thou hast less joy, thou shalt sin less, neither shall any vain objects call away thy thoughts from the serious and sad meditation of spiritual things.

Before, it was no otherwise with thee than the prophet Jeremiah reports it to have been with the Jews, that *death is come up by the windows,* Jer. ix. 21. So it was with our great grandmother Eve: *She saw the tree was pleasant to the eyes, and* thereupon *took of the fruit,* Gen. iii. 6. So it hath been ever since with all the fruit of her womb, both in the old and latter world: *The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose,* Gen. vi. 2. Insomuch as not filthy lusts only, but even adulteries take up their lodgings in the eye; there the blessed apostle finds them: *Having eyes,* saith he, *full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin,* 2 Peter ii. 14.

While, therefore, thine *heart walked after thine eyes,* as Job speaks, Job xxxi. 7, it could do no other but *carry thee down to the chambers of death,* Prov. vii. 27. Thou art now delivered from that danger of so deadly a misguidance.

Hath not the loss of thine eyes withal freed thee of a world of sorrows? The old word is, "What the eye views not, the heart rues not." Hadst thou but seen what others were forced to behold, those fearful conflagrations, those piles of murdered carcasses, those streams of Christian blood, those savage violences, those merciless rapines, those sacrilegious outrages, thine heart could not choose but bleed within thee; now thou art affected with them only aloof off, as receiving them by the perfect intelligence of thine ear from the unfeeling relation of others.

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Sect. VI.—*The cheerfulness of some blind men.*

Thine eyes are lost; what need thy heart to go with them? I have known a blind man more cheerful than I could be with both mine eyes.

Old Isaac was dark-sighted when he gave the blessing contrary to his own intentions to his son Jacob, yet it seems he lived forty years after, and could be pleased then to have good cheer made him with wine and vension, Gen. xxvii. 25.

Our life doth not lie in our eyes; *The spirit of man* is that which *upholds his infirmities*, Prov. xviii. 14. Labour to raise that to a cheerful disposition; even in thy bodily darkness, there shall be light and joy to thy soul, Esther viii. 16.

Sect. VII.—*The supply which God gives in other faculties.*

Hath God taken away thine eyes, but hath he not given thee an abundant supply in other faculties? Are not thine inward senses the more quick? thy memory stronger? thy phantasy more active? thy understanding more apprehensive?

The wonders that we have heard and read of blind men's memories were not easy to believe, if it were not obvious to conceive that the removal of all distractions gives them an opportunity both of a careful reposition of all desired objects, and of a sure fixedness of them where they are laid. Hence have we seen it come to pass, that some blind men have attained to those perfections which their eyes could never have feoffed them in.

It is very memorable that our ecclesiastical story reports[t] of Didymus of Alexandria, who, being blind from his infancy, through his prayers and diligent endeavours, reached unto such an high pitch of knowledge in logic, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, as was admired by the learned masters of those arts; and for his rare insight into divinity was by great Athanasius approved to be the doctor of the chair in that famous church.

What need we doubt of this truth, when our own times have so clearly seconded it? having yielded divers worthy divines, God's seers, bereaved of bodily eyes.

Amongst the rest, there was one[u] in my time, very eminent in

[t] Ruffin. Eccl. Hist. l. ii. c. 7.

[u] Mr. Fisher, in Trinity College in Cambridge.

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the University of Cambridge, whom I had occasion to dispute with for his degrees, of great skill both in tongue and arts, and of singular acuteness of judgment. It is somewhat strange, that Suidas [x] reports of Neoclides: that, being a blind man, he could steal more cunningly than any that had use of eyes. Sure, I may say boldly of our Fisher, that he was more dexterous in picking the locks of difficult authors, and fetching forth the treasures of their hidden senses, than those that had the sharpest eyes about him; insomuch as it was noted, those were singular proficients which employed themselves in reading to him. If they read books to him, he read lectures the while to them; and still taught more than he learned.

As for the other outward senses, they are commonly more exquisite in the blind. We read of some who have been of so accurate a touch, that by their very feeling they could distinguish betwixt black and white. And for the ear, as our philosophers [y] observe that sounds are sweeter to the blind than to the sighted, so also, that they are more curiously judged of by them, the virtue of both those senses being now contracted into one.

But the most perfect recompense of these bodily eyes is in the exaltation of our spiritual, so much more enlightened towards the beatifical vision of God, as they apprehend more darkness in all earthly objects. Certainly thou shalt not miss these material eyes, if thou mayest find thy soul thus happily enlightened.

SECT. VIII.—*The benefits of the eyes which once we had.*

Thine eyes are lost; it is a blessing that once thou hadst them. Hadst thou been born blind, what a stranger hadst thou, in all likelihood, been to God and the world! Hadst thou not once seen the face of this heaven and this earth and this sea, what expressions could have made thee sufficiently apprehensive of the wonderful works of thy Creator! what discourse could have made thee to understand what light is? what the sun, the fountain of it? what the heavens, the glorious region of it? and what the moon and stars, illuminated by it? How couldst thou have had thy thoughts raised so high as to give glory to that great God whose infinite power hath wrought all these marvellous things?

No doubt God hath his own ways of mercy even for those that

[x] Suidas ex Aristophane.

[y] The Lord Verulam. [Nat. Hist. Cent. iii. 235.]—Friar Bacon, in his "Natural History."

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are born dark, not requiring what he hath not given: graciously supplying, by his Spirit, in the vessel of his election, what is wanting in the outward man; so as even those that could never see the face of the world shall see the face of the God that made it. But in an ordinary course of proceeding, those which have been blind from their birth must needs want those helps of knowing and glorifying God in his mighty works which lie open to the seeing.

These once filled thine eyes, and stay with thee still, after thine eyes have forsaken thee. What shouldest thou do but walk on in the strength of those fixed thoughts, and be always adoring the majesty of that God whom that sight hath represented unto thee so glorious, and, in an humble submission to his good pleasure, strive against all the discomforts of thy sufferings?

Our story tells us[z] of a valiant soldier, answerable to the name he bore, Polezelus, who, after his eyes were struck out in the battle, covering his face with his target, fought still, laying about him as vehemently as if he had seen whom to smite. So do thou, my son, with no less courage; let not the loss of thine eyes hinder thee from a cheerful resistance of those spiritual enemies which labour to draw thee into an impatient murmuring against the hand of thy God; wait humbly upon that God who hath better eyes in store for thee than those that thou hast lost.

Sect. IX.—*The supply of one sense by another.*

Thou hast lost thy hearing:—It is not easy to determine whether loss is the greater; of the eye, or of the ear: both are grievous.

Now all the world is to thee as dumb, since thou art deaf to it. How small a matter hath made thee a mere cypher amongst men!

These two are the senses of instruction: there is no other way for intelligence to be conveyed to the soul, whether in secular or in spiritual affairs: the eye is the window, the ear is the door by which all knowledge enters: in matters of observation, by the eye; in matter of faith, by the ear, Rom. x. 17.

Had it pleased God to shut up both these senses from thy birth, thy estate had been utterly disconsolate: neither had there been anypossible access for comfort to thy soul: and if he had so done to thee in thy riper age, there had been no way for thee but to

[z] Suidas, v. *Hippias.*

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live on thy former store: but now that he hath vouchsafed to leave thee one passage open, it behoves thee to supply the one sense by the other, and to let in those helps by the window which are denied entrance at the door.

And since that Infinite Goodness hath been pleased to lend thee thine ear so long, as till thou hast laid the sure grounds of faith in thy heart; now thou mayest work upon them in this silent opportunity with heavenly meditations, and raise them up to no less height than thou mightest have done by the help of the quickest ear.

It is well for thee, that in the fulness of thy senses thou wert careful to improve thy bosom as a magazine of heavenly thoughts, providing, with the wise patriarch, for the seven years of dearth: otherwise, now that the passages are thus blocked up, thou couldst not but have been in danger of affamishing. Thou hast now abundant leisure to recall and ruminate upon those holy counsels which thy better times laid up in thy heart; and to thy happy advantage, findest the difference betwixt a wise providence and a careless neglect.

SECT. X.—*The better condition of the inward ear.*

Thine outward hearing is gone; but thou hast an inward and better ear, whereby thou hearest the secret motions of God's Spirit, which shall never be lost.

How many thousands whom thou enviest are in a worse condition! They have an outward and bodily ear, whereby they hear the voice of men, but they want that spiritual ear which perceives the least whispering of the Holy Ghost. Ears they have, but not hearing ears, for fashion more than use. Wise Solomon makes and observes the distinction: *The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them.* Prov. xx. 12. And a greater than Solomon can say of his former auditors, *Hearing they hear not,* Matt. xiii. 13. If thou have an ear for God, though deaf to men, how much happier art thou than those millions of men that have an ear for men and are deaf to God!

SECT. XI.—*The grief that arises from hearing evil.*

Thou hast lost thy hearing:—And therewith no small deal of sorrow. How would it grieve thy soul to hear those woful ejaculations, those pitiful complaints, those hideous blasphemies, those mad paradoxes, those hellish heresies, wherewith thine ear would

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have been wounded; had it not been barred against their entrance! It is thy just grief, that thou missest of the hearing of many good words: it is thy happiness, that thou art freed from the hearing of many evil. It is an even lay betwixt the benefit of hearing good and the torment of hearing evil.

CHAP. XII.

COMFORTS AGAINST BARRENNESS.

SECT. I.—*The blessing of fruitfulness seasoned with sorrows.*

Thou complainest of dry loins and a barren womb:—So did a better man before thee, even the father of the faithful: *What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?* Gen. xv. 2. So did the wife of faithful Israel; *Give me children, or else I die.* Gen. xxx. 1. So desirous hath nature been, even in the holiest, to propagate itself, and so impatient of a denial. *Lo, children and the fruit of the womb are an heritage and gift that cometh from the Lord:* Psalm cxxvii. 3. *Happy is he that hath his quiver full of such shafts:* ver. 5. It is the blessing that David grudged to wicked ones; *They have children at their desire,* Psalm xvii. 14. It was the curse which God inflicted upon the family of Abimelech, king of Gerar, that he *closed up all the wombs in his house for Sarah's sake,* Gen. xx. 18: and the judgment threatened to Ephraim is *a miscarrying womb and dry breasts.* Hos. ix. 14: and Jeconiah's sad doom is, *Write this man childless,* Jer. xxii. 30. As, on the contrary, it is a special favour of God, that *the barren hath borne seven;* 1 Sam. ii. 5: and it is noted by the Psalmist as a wonder of God's mercy, that *he maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children,* Psalm cxiii. 9.

It is pity he was ever born that holds not children a blessing; yet not simple and absolute, but according as it may prove.

She hath a double favour from God that is *a joyful mother of children:* many a one breeds her sorrow, breeds her death.

There is scarce any other blessing from God seasoned with so much acrimony, both of misery and danger. Do but lay together the sick fits of breeding, the painful throes of travail, the weary attendances of nursing, the anxious cares of education, the fears and doubts of misguidance, the perpetual solicitude for their provision, the heartbreaking grief for their miscarriage, and tell me whether thy bemoaned sterility have not more ease, less sorrow?

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SECT. II.—*The pains of childbearing.*

It is thy sorrow, then, that thou art not fruitful:—Consider that thou art herein freed from a greater sorrow: *In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children;* Gen. iii. 16.

Do but think upon the shrieks and torments that thou hast seen and heard in the painful travails of thy neighbours. One thou hast seen wearing the days and nights in restless pangs, and calling for death in a despair of delivery: another, after the unprofitable labours of midwives, forced to have her bowels ransacked by the hand of another sex. One hath her dead burden torn from her by piecemeal; another is delivered of her life and birth together. One languisheth to death after the hand of an unskilful midwife; another is weary of her life through the soreness of her breasts. All these sorrows thou hast escaped by this one: in these regards, how many whom thou enviest have thought thee happier than themselves!

SECT. III.—*The misery of illdisposed and undutiful children.*

Thou art afflicted that thou art not a mother:—Many a one is so that wishes she had been barren. If either the child prove deformed and misshapen, or, upon further growth, unnatural and wicked, what a corrosive is this to her that bore him!

Rebekah thought it long to be after her marriage twenty years childless: her holy husband, at sixty years of age, prays to God for issue by her, Gen. xxv. 20, 21. His devotion, as the Jewish doctors say, carried him to Mount Moriah for this purpose; that in the same place where his life was miraculously preserved from the knife of his father, it might, by the like miracle, be renewed in his posterity: God hears him: Rebekah conceives: but when she felt that early combat of her struggling twins in her womb she can say, *If it be so, why am I thus?* ver. 22. And when she saw a shild come forth all clad in hair, ver. 25, and after saw his conditions no less rough than his hide, ch. xxvii. 41, do we not think she wished that part of her burden unborn?

Certainly children are, according to their proof, either blessings or crosses. Hast thou a child well disposed, well governed? *A wise son maketh a glad father.* Hast thou a child disorderly and debauched? *A foolish son is the heaviness of his mother, and the calamity of his father.* Prov. x. 1; xv. 20; xix. 13. Hast thou a son that is unruly, stubborn, unnatural? as commonly the scions overrule the stock: *He that wasteth his father, and chaseth*

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away his mother, is a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach. ch. xix. 26. And if such a son should live and die impenitent, what can be answerable to the discomfort of that parent who shall think that a piece of himself is in hell?

SECT. IV.—*The cares of parents for their children.*

Thou hast no children:—As thou hast less joy, so thou hast less trouble.

It is a world of work and thoughts that belong to these living possessions. Artemidorus observes, that to dream of children imports cares to follow[a]. Surely as they are our greatest cares, so they bring many lesser cares with them. Before, thou hadst but one mouth to feed, now many. And upon whom doth this charge lie but upon the parent? Not nature only, but religion casts it upon him: for, *if any provide not for his own, especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel,* 1 Tim. v. 8. Dost thou not see that many suckers growing up from the root of the tree draw away the sap from the stock? and many rivulets let out from the main channel leave the stream shallow? So it must be with thee and thine.

But this expense is not more necessary than comfortable. I remember a great man coming to my house at Waltham, and, seeing all my children standing in the order of their age and stature, said, "These are they that make rich men poor:" but he straight received this answer; "Nay, my lord, these are they that make a poor man rich; for there is not one of these whom we would part with for all your wealth."

Indeed, wherefore do we receive, but to distribute? and what are we but the farmers of those we leave behind us? And if we do freely lay out our substance beforehand for their good, so much of our rent is happily cleared.

It is easy to observe, that none are so gripple and hardfisted as the childless; whereas those who, for the maintenance of large families, are inured to frequent disbursements, find such experience of Divine Providence in the faithful managing of their affairs, as that they lay out with more cheerfulness than they receive.

Wherein their care must be abated when God takes it off from them to himself; and if they be not wanting to themselves, their faith gives them ease in casting their burden upon Him who hath both more power and more right to it, since our children are

[a] Artemidor. de Insomniis. l. i. c. 16. [φροντίδας γὰρ καὶ λύπας σημαίνει.]

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more his than our own. He that feedeth the *young ravens* (Psalm cxlvii. 9.), can he fail the best of his creatures?

Worthy Master Greenham tells us of a gentlewoman, who, coming into the cottage of a poor neighbour, and seeing it furnished with store of children, could say, "Here are the mouths, but where is the meat?" but not long after she was paid in her own coin; for the poor woman, coming to her after the burial of her last and now only child, inverted the question upon her, "Here is meat, but where are the mouths?"

Surely the great Housekeeper of the world, whose charge we are, will never leave any of his menials without the bread of sufficiency; and who are so fit to be his purveyors as the parents for their own brood? Nature hath taught the very birds to pick out the best of the grains for their young: Nature sends that moisture out of the root which gives life to the branches and blossoms.

Sometimes it meets with a kind retaliation; some stork-like disposition repays the loving offices done by the parents, in a dutiful retribution to their age or necessity.

But how often have we seen the contrary! Here an unsatisfiable importunity of drawing from the parent that maintenance which is but necessary for his own subsistence; so we have seen a young bat hanging on the teat of her dam for milk even when she is dying; so we have seen some insatiable lambs forcing the udder of their dams when they have been as big as the ewe that yeaned them. There an undutiful and unnatural neglect, whether in not owning the meanness of those that begot them, or in not supporting the weakness of their decayed estate by due maintenance. Ingratitude is odious in any man, but in a child monstrous.

SECT. V.—*The great grief in the loss of children.*

It is thy grief that thou never hadst a child: believe him that hath tried it; there is not so much comfort in the having of children as there is sorrow in parting with them; especially when they are come to their proof; when their parts and disposition have raised our hopes of them, and doubled our affection towards them.

And as, according to the French proverb, "He that hath not cannot lose;" so contrarily, he that hath must lose. Our meeting is not more certain than our parting; either we must leave them, and so their grief for us must double ours; or they must leave us,

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and so our grief for them must be no less than our love was of them.

If then thou wilt be truly wise, set thy heart upon that only absolute good which is not capable of losing. Divided affections must needs abate of their force. Now since there are no objects of darkness which might distract thy love, be sure to place it wholly upon that Infinite Goodness which shall entertain it with mercy and reward it with blessedness.

If Elkanah therefore could say to his barren wife Hannah, *Why weepest thou? and why is thy heart heavy? am not I better to thee than ten sons?* 1 Sam. i. 8; how much more comfortably mayest thou hear the Father of mercies say to thy soul, "Why is thy heart heavy? am not I better to thee than ten thousand sons?"

CHAP. XIII.

COMFORTS AGAINST WANT OF SLEEP.

SECT. I.—*The misery of the want of rest; with the best remedy.*

THOU art afflicted with want of sleep: a complaint incident to distempered bodies and thoughtful minds. O how wearisome a thing it is to spend the long night in tossing up and down in a restless bed in the chase of sleep, which the more eagerly it is followed flies so much the farther from us! Couldst thou obtain of thyself to forbear the desire of it, perhaps it would come alone; now that thou suest for it, like to some froward piece, it is coy and overly, and punishes thee with thy longing. Lo, he that could command an hundred and seven and twenty provinces, yet could not command rest: *On that night his sleep departed from him,* Esth. vi. 1, neither could be either forced or entreated to his bed. And the great Babylonian monarch, though he laid some hand on sleep, yet he could not hold it; for *his sleep brake from him,* Dan. ii. 1. And for great and wise Solomon, it would not so much as come within his view: *Neither night nor day seeth he sleep with his eyes,* Eccl. viii. 16. Surely as there is no earthly thing more comfortable to nature than bodily rest (Jer. xxxi. 26.), so there is nothing whose loss is more grievous and disheartening. If the senses be not sometimes, in meet vicissitudes, tied up, how can they choose but run themselves out of breath, and weary and spend themselves to nothing? If the body be not refreshed with a moderate interchange of repose, how can it but languish in all the parts of it? and as commonly the soul

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follows the temper of the body, how can that but find a sensible discomposure and debilitation in all her faculties and operations? Do we not see the savagest creatures tamed with want of rest? Do we not find this rack alone to have been torture enough to fetch from poor souls a confessional discovery of those acts they never did? do we not find reveries and frenzies the ordinary attendants of sleeplessness? Herein therefore thy tongue hath just cause to complain of thine eyes.

For remedy, instead of closing thy lids to wait for sleep, lift up thy stiff eyes to Him that *giveth his beloved rest*, Ps. cxxvii. 2. Whatever be the means, He it is that *holdeth* thine *eyes waking*, Ps. lxxvii. 4. He that made thine eyes keeps off sleep from thy body for the good of thy soul: let not thine eyes wake without thine heart. The spouse of Christ can say, *I sleep, but my heart waketh*, Cant. v. 2: how much more should she say, "Mine eyes wake, and my heart waketh also!" When thou canst not see sleep with thine eyes, labour to see Him that is invisible; one glimpse of that sight is more worth than all the sleep that thine eyes can be capable of. Give thyself up into his hands, to be disposed of at his will. What is this sweet acquiescence but the rest of the soul? which if thou canst find in thyself, thou shalt quietly digest the want of thy bodily sleep.

SECT. II.—*The favour of freedom from pain.*

Thou wantest sleep: take heed thou do not aggravate thine affliction. It is only an evil of loss, no evil of sense: a mere lack of what thou wishest, not a pain of what thou feelest. Alas! how many, besides want of rest, are tortured with intolerable torments in all the parts of their body; who would think themselves happy if they might be put into thy condition! might they but have ease, how gladly would they forbear rest! Be not therefore so much troubled that it is no better with thee, but rather be thankful that it is no worse.

SECT. III.—*The favour of health without sleep.*

Thou lackest sleep: a thing that we desire not so much for its own sake as in a way to health. What if God be pleased so to dispose of thee as to give thee health without it?

So he hath done to some. It is a small matter that Goulart[b] reports out of Gaspar Wolfius, of a woman in Padua that con-

[b] Histoires Memorables: c. Veilles.

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tinued fifteen days and nights without sleep. That is very memorable which Seneca tells us of great Mecænas, that in three years he slept not *ne horæ momento,* "so much as the space of an hour:" which however Lipsius thinks good to mitigate with a favourable construction, as conceiving an impossibility of an absolute sleeplessness; yet if we shall compare it with other instances of the same kind, we shall find no reason to scruple the utmost rigour of that relation. That a frantic man, of whom Fernelius writes[c], should continue a year and two months without any sleep at all, is no wonder in comparison of that which learned Heurnius tells us[d], upon good assurance given him when he was a student in Padua; that Nizolius, the famous Ciceronian, lived ten whole years without sleep. And even in our time and climate I have been informed by credible testimony, that Monsieur L'Angles, a French physician at London, lived no fewer years altogether sleepless. But that exceeds all example which Monsieur Goulart reports[e] out of an author of good reputation, of a certain gentlewoman, who for thirty-five years remained without any sleep, and found no inconvenience or distemper thereby; as was witnessed by her husband and servants.

Lo, the hand of God is not shortened. He who in our time miraculously protracted the life of the maid of Meures so many years without meat, hath sustained the lives of these forenamed persons thus long without sleep, that it might appear—*Man lives not by meat* or sleep *only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God,* Matt. iv. 4; Deut. viii. 3. If he should please to bless thee with a sleepless health, the favour is far greater than if he allowed thee to snort out thy time in a dull unprofitable rest.

Sect. IV.—*Sleep but a symptom of mortality.*

Thou wantest sleep: *Behold, he that keepeth Israel doth neither slumber nor sleep;* and those blessed spirits that do continually see the face of God never sleep.

Sleep is but a symptom of frail mortality, whereof the less we do or can partake, we come so much the nearer to those spiritual natures whose perfection makes them uncapable of sleep.

Hereupon it was that those retired Christians in the primitive times, which affected to come nearest to an angelical life, wilfully

[c] Patholog. l. v. c. 2. [d] Lib. de morbis capitis: c. 16.
[e] Goulart: ibidem.

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repelled sleep, neither would ever admit it, till it necessarily forced itself upon them [f].

Lo, then, thou sufferest no more, out of the distemper of humours or unnatural obstructions, than better men have willingly drawn upon themselves, out of holy resolutions. It is but our construction that makes those things tedious to us which have been well taken by others.

SECT. V.—*No use of sleep whither we are going.*

Thou wantest sleep:—Have patience, my son, for a while. Thou art going where there shall be no need, no use of sleep; and in the mean time thy better part would not, cannot rest. Though the gates be shut, that it cannot show itself abroad, it is ever, and ever will be active. As for this earthly piece, it shall ere long sleep its fill, where no noise can wake it, till the *voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God* shall call it up in the morning of the resurrection, 1 Thess. iv. 16.

CHAP. XIV.

COMFORTS AGAINST THE INCONVENIENCES OF OLD AGE.

SECT. I.—*The illimitation of age, and the miseries that attend it.*

OLD age is that which we all desire to aspire unto, and when we have attained, are as ready to complain of as our greatest misery; verifying, in part, that old observation, that wedlock and age are things which we desire and repent of.

Is this our ingratitude or inconstancy, that we are weary of what we wished?

Perhaps this accusation may not be universal. There is much difference in constitutions, and much latitude in old age. Infancy and youth have their limits; age admits of no certain determination.

At seventy years, David was old and stricken in years; and they *covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat*, 1 Kings i. 1; whereas Caleb can profess—*Now, lo, I am fourscore and five years old; as yet I am as strong this day, as I was in the day*

[f] Sozomen. l. vi. c. 29.

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that Moses sent me to spy out the land; as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out and come in, Joshua xiv. 10, 11. And beyond him—*Moses was an hundred and twenty years old,* when *his eye was not dim, nor his natural strength abated,* Deut. xxxiv. 7. Methuselah was but old when he was nine hundred sixty-five, Gen. v. 27.

But as for the generality of mankind, the same Moses, who lived to see an hundred and twenty years, hath set man's ordinary period at half his own term: *The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow,* Ps. xc. 10. Lo, fourscore years alone are load enough for the strength, much more for the weakness of age; but when labour and sorrow are added to the weight, how can we but double under the burden?

He was both old and wise that said[s], out of experience, that our last days are the dregs of our life; the clearer part is gone, and all drawn out; the lees sink down to the bottom. Who can express the miserable inconveniences that attend old age? wherein our cares must needs be multiplied, according to the manifold occasions of our affairs; for the world is a net, wherein the more we stir the more we are entangled. And for our bodily grievances, what varieties do we here meet withal! What aches of the bones! what belking of the joints! what convulsions of sinews! what torments of the bowels, stone, cholic, strangury! what distillations of rheum! what hollow coughs! what weaknesses of retention, expulsion, digestion! what decay of senses! as age is no other than the common sewer, into which all diseases of our life are wont to empty themselves. Well, therefore, might Sarah say, *After I am waxed old, shall I have pleasure?* Gen. xviii. 12. And good Barzillai justly excuses himself for not accepting the gracious invitation of David: *I am this day fourscore years old: and can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? wherefore then should thy servant be yet a burden unto my lord the king?* 2 Sam. xix. 35.

Lo, these are they which the preacher calls *the evil days,* and *the years wherein a man shall say, I have no pleasure;* wherein

[s] Sen. Ep. 58. [pars summa vitæ—fex vitæ, &c.]

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the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, are darkened, and the clouds return after the rain; when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out at the windows be darkened, Ecclesiast. xii. 1, 2, 3. Shortly, what is our old age but the winter of our life? How can we then expect any other than gloomy weather, chilling frosts, storms, and tempests?

SECT. II.—*Old age a blessing.*

But while we do thus querulously aggravate the incommodities of age, we must beware lest we derogate from the bounty of our Maker, and disparage those blessings which he accounts precious: amongst which, old age is none of the meanest.

Had he not put that value upon it, would he have honoured it with his own style, calling himself, *The Ancient of days?* Dan. vii. 9, 13, 22. Would he else have set out this mercy as a reward of obedience to himself—*I will fulfil the number of thy days?* Exod. xxiii. 26: and of obedience to our parents, *To live long in the land?* Exod. xx. 12. Would he have promised it as a marvellous favour to restored Jerusalem, now become a city of truth, that *there shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age?* Zech. viii. 4. Would he else have denounced it as a judgment to over-indulgent Eli, *There shall not be an old man in thine house for ever?* 1 Sam. ii. 32. Far be it from us to despise that which God doth honour, and to turn his blessing into a curse!

Yea, the same God, who knows best the price of his own favours, as he makes no small estimation of age himself, so he hath thought fit to call for an high respect to be given to it by himself out of an holy awe to himself: *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord.* Lev. xix. 32. Hence it is, that he hath pleased to put together the *ancient* and the *honourable,* Isa. ix. 15, and hath told us, that a *hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness,* Prov. xvi. 31; xx. 29; and, lastly, makes it an argument of the deplored estate of Jerusalem, that they *favoured not the elders,* Lam. iv. 16.

As, therefore, we too sensibly feel what to complain of, so we well know what privileges we may challenge as due to our age;

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even such as nature itself hath taught those heathens which have been in the next degree to savage. If pride and skill have made the Athenians uncivil, yet a young Lacedæmonian will rise up and yield his place in the theatre to neglected age.

SECT. III.—*The advantages of old age:* 1. *fearlessness.*

It is not a little injurious so to fasten our eyes upon the discommodities of any condition as not to take in the advantages that belong to it, which, carefully laid together, may perhaps sway the balance to an equal poise. Let it be true, that old age is oppressed with many bodily griefs, but what if it yield other immunities which may keep the scales even?

Whereof it is not the least, that it gives us firm resolution and bold security against dangers and death itself; for the old man knows how little of his clew is left in the winding; and therefore, when just occasion is offered, sticks not so much upon so inconsiderable a remainder.

Old age and orbity, as Cesellius professed, were those two things that emboldened him; and when Castrcius refused to deliver the hostages of Placentia to Carbo the consul, and was threatened with many swords, he answered those menaces with his many years.

And, that we may not disdain homebred instances, and may see that brave spirits may lodge in cottages, in my time a plain villager in the rude Peak, when thieves, taking advantage of the absence of his family, breaking into his solitary dwelling, and, finding him sitting alone by his fireside, fell violently upon him, and one of them, setting his dagger to his heart, swore that he would presently kill him if he did not instantly deliver to them that money which they knew he had lately received; the old man looks boldly in the face of that stout villain, and with an undaunted courage returns him this answer in his Peakish dialect: "Nay, even put fro thee, son: I have lived long enough; but I tell thee unless thou mend thy manners, thou wilt never live to see half my days: put fro thee, if thou wilt."

What young man would have been so easily induced to part with his life, and have been so ready to give entertainment to an unexpected death? Surely, the hope and love of life commonly softens the spirits of vigorous youth, and dissuades it from those enterprises which are attended with manifest peril; whereas extreme age teacheth us to contemn dangers.

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SECT. IV.—*The second advantage of old age, freedom from passions.*

Yet a greater privilege of age is a freedom from those impetuous passions wherewith youth is commonly overswayed; for, altogether with our natural heat is also abated the heat of our inordinate lusts; so as now our weaker appetite may easily be subdued to reason. The temperate old man in the story, when one showed him a beautiful face, could answer, "I have long since left to be eyesick:" and that other could say of pleasure, "I have gladly withdrawn myself from the service of that imperious mistress.

What an unreasonable vassalage our youthful lusts subject us unto, we need no other instance than in the strongest and wisest man.

How was the strongest man Samson effeminated by his impotent passion, and weakened in his intellectuals so far, as wilfully to betray his own life to a mercenary harlot, and to endure to hear her say, *Tell me wherewith thou mayest be bound to do thee hurt!* Judges xvi. 6. How easily might he have answered thee, O Delilah, "Even with these cords of brutish sensuality, wherewith thou hast already bound me, to the loss of my liberty, mine eyes, my life!"

How was the wisest man, Solomon, besotted with his strange wives, so as to be drawn away to the worship of strange gods!

And how may the fir-trees howl when the cedars fall! Who can hope to be free from being transported with irregular affections, when we see such great precedents of frailty before our eyes?

From the danger of these miserable miscarriages our age happily secures us; putting us into that quiet harbour, whence we may see young men perilously tossed with those tempests of unruly passions from which our coolér age hath freed us.

SECT. V.—*The third advantage of age, experimental knowledge.*

Add hereunto the benefit of experimental knowledge, wherewith age is wont to enrich us, every dram whereof is worth many pounds of the best youthly contentments; in comparison whereof, the speculative knowledge is weak and imperfect. This may come good-cheap; perhaps cost us nothing: that, commonly, we pay dear for; and therefore is justly esteemed the more precious. If experience be the mistress of fools, I am sure it is the mother

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of wisdom. Neither can it be, except we be too much wanting to ourselves, but the long observation of such variety of actions and events, as meet with us in the whole course of our life, must needs leave with us such sure rules of judgment as may be unfailing directions for ourselves and others. In vain shall this be expected from our younger years; which the wise philosopher excludes from being meet auditors, much less judges of true morality. In regard whereof, well might the old man say, "Ye young men think us old men fools, but we old men know you young men to be fools."

Certainly, what value soever ignorance may put upon it, this fruit of age is such, as that the earth hath nothing equally precious. It was a profane word, and fit for the mouth of an heathen poet, that prudence is above destiny: but surely a Christian may modestly and justly say, that, next to Divine Providence, human prudence may challenge the supreme place in the administration of these earthly affairs, and that age may claim the greatest interest in that prudence. Young Elihu could say, *Multitude of years should teach wisdom*, Job xxxii. 7; and the Wise Man, "O how comely a thing is judgment for gray hairs, and for ancient men to know counsel! O how comely is the wisdom of old men, and understanding and counsel to men of honour!" Ecclus. xxv. 4, 5. In regard whereof, the Grecians had wont to say, that young men are for action; old men, for advice: and among the Romans we know that the senators take their name from age.

That, therefore, which is the weakness of old men's eyes, that, their visual spirits not uniting till some distance, they better discern things farther off, is the praise and strength of their mental eyes: they see either judgments or advantages afar off, and accordingly frame their determinations. It is observed that old lutes sound better than new; and it was Rehoboam's folly and undoing, that he would rather follow the counsel of his green heads that stood before him, than of those grave senators that had stood before his wiser father, 1 Kings xii. 6, &c.

Not that mere age is of itself thus rich in wisdom and knowledge; but age well cultured, well improved. There are old men that do but live; or rather, have a being upon earth: so have stocks and stones, as well as they; who can have no proof of their many years but their gray hairs and infirmities. There are those who, like to Hermogenes, are old men while they are boys, and children when they are old men. These, the elder they

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grow, are so much more stupid. Time is an ill measure of age; which should rather be meted by proficiency, by ripeness of judgment, by the monuments of our commendable and useful labours. If we have thus bestowed ourselves, our autumn will show what our spring was, and the colour of our hair will yield us more cause to fear our pride than our dejection.

SECT. VI.—*Age in some is vigorous and well affected.*

We accuse our age of many weaknesses and indispositions; but these imputations must not be universal: many of these are the faults of the person, not of the age. He said well, "As old wine doth not turn sour with age, no more doth every nature." Old oil is noted to be clearer and hotter, in a medicinal use, than new. There are those who are pettish and crabbed in youth; there are, contrarily, those who are mild, gentle, and sociable in their decayed years. There are those who are crazy in their prime; and there are those who in their wane are vigorous. There are those, who, ere the fulness of their age, have lost their memory; as Hermogenes, Cornivus, Antonius Caracalla, Georgius Trapezuntius, and Nizolius: there are those, whose intellectuals have so happily held out, that they have been best at the last. Plato in his last year, which was fourscore and one, died as it were with his pen in his hand: Isocrates wrote his best piece at ninety-four years: and it is said of Demosthenes, that when death summoned him, at an hundred years and somewhat more, he bemoaned himself, that he must now die, when he began to get some knowledge. And as for spiritual graces and improvements, *such as be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God: they also shall bring forth more fruit in their age, and shall be fat and well-liking*, Psalm xcii. 13, 14.

SECT. VII.—*The fourth advantage of age, near approach to our end.*

But the chief benefit of our age is, our near approach to our journey's end; for the end of all motion is rest; which when we have once attained, there remains nothing but fruition.

Now our age brings us, after a weary race, within some breathings of our goal: for if young men may die, old men must: a condition, which a mere carnal heart bewails and abhors; complaining of nature, as niggardly in her dispensations of the shortest time to her noblest creature; and envying the oaks, which many generations of men must leave standing and growing.

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No marvel: for the worldling thinks himself here at home and looks upon death as a banishment: he hath placed his heaven here below; and can see nothing in his remove, but either annihilation or torment.

But for us Christians, who *know that while we are present in the body we are absent from the Lord*, 2 Cor. v. 6, and do justly account ourselves foreigners, our life a pilgrimage, heaven our home; how can we but rejoice, that, after a tedious and painful travel, we do now draw near to the threshold of our Father's house, wherein we know there are many mansions, and all glorious? I could blush to hear an heathen[h] say, "If God would offer me the choice of renewing my age, and returning to my first childhood, I should heartily refuse it: for I should be loath, after I have passed so much of my race, to be called back from the goal to the bars of my first setting out:" and to hear a Christian whining and puling at the thought of his dissolution. Where is our faith of an heaven, if, having been so long sea-beaten, we be loath to think of putting into the safe and blessed harbour of immortality?

CHAP. XV.

COMFORTS AGAINST THE FEARS AND PAINS OF DEATH.

SECT. I.—*The fear of death natural.*

THOU fearest death: thou wert not a man if thou didst not so: the holiest, the wisest, the strongest that ever were, have done no less. He is the king of fear, and therefore may and must command it. Thou mayest hear the man after God's own heart say, *The sorrows of death compassed me*, Ps. cxvi. 3: and again, *My soul is full of troubles: my life draweth nigh to the grave: I am counted with them that go down to the pit, as a man that hath no strength; free among the dead*, Ps. lxxxviii. 3, 4, 5. Thou mayest hear great and good Hezekiah, upon the message of his death, chattering like a crane or a swallow, and mourning as a dove, Is. xxxviii. 14.

Thou fearedst, as a man: I cannot blame thee: but thou must overcome thy fear, as a Christian; which thou shalt do, if, from the terrible aspect of the messenger, thou shalt cast thine eyes upon the gracious and amiable face of the God that sends him. Holy David shows the way: *The snares of death prevented me: in my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God: he heard my voice out of his temple, and my cry came before*

[h] Cicero de Senect. [§ 22. et si quis deus mihi largiatur, &c.]

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him, even into his ears, Ps. xviii. 5, 6. Lo, he that is *our God is the God of salvation; and unto God, the Lord, belong the issues of death*, Ps. lxviii. 20. Make him thy friend, and death shall be no other than advantage, Phil. i. 21.

It is true, as the Wise Man saith, that "God made not death," but that "through the envy of the devil death came into the world," Wisd. i. 13; ii. 24; but it is as true, that though God made him not, yet he is pleased to employ him as his messenger, to summon some souls to judgment, to invite others to glory; and for these latter, *precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints*, Ps. cxvi. 15: and what reason hast thou to abominate that which God accounts precious?

SECT. II.—*Remedy of fear, acquaintance with death.*

Thou art afraid of death: acquaint thyself with him more, and thou shalt fear him less. Even bears and lions, which at the first sight affrighted us, upon frequent viewing lose their terror. Inure thine eyes to the sight of death, and that face shall begin not to displease thee. Thou must shortly dwell with him for a long time; for *the days of darkness* are *many*, Eccl. xi. 8. Do thou in the mean time entertain him; let him be sure to be thy daily guest. Thus the blessed apostle, *I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus, I die daily*, 1 Cor. xv. 31. Bid him to thy board; lodge him in thy bed; talk with him in thy closet; walk with him in thy garden, as Joseph of Arimathea did; and by no means suffer him to be a stranger to thy thoughts. This familiarity shall bring thee to a delight in the company of him whom thou didst at first abhor; so as thou shalt, with the Chosen Vessel, say, *I have a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is best of all*, Phil. i. 23.

SECT. III.—*The misapprehension of death.*

Thou art grievously afraid of death: Is it not upon a mistaking? Our fears are apt to imagine and to aggravate evils. Even Christ himself, walking upon the waters, was by the disciples trembled at, as some dreadful apparition.

Perhaps, my son, thou lookest at death as some utter abolition or extinction of thy being; and nature must needs shrink back at the thought of not being at all.

This is a foul and dangerous misprision.

It is but a departing which thou callest a death. See how God himself styles it to the father of the faithful: *Thou shalt go*

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to thy fathers in peace: thou shalt be buried in a good old age, Gen. xv. 15: and of his holy grandchild, Israel, the Spirit of God says, *When Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people,* Gen. xlix. 33. Lo, dying is no other than going to our fathers, and gathering to our people; with whom we do and shall live in that other and better world, and with whom we shall reappear glorious. Let but thy faith represent death to thee in this shape, and he shall not appear so formidable.

Do but mark in what familiar terms it pleased God to confer with his servant Moses concerning his death: *Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession: and die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered to thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered to his people,* Deut. xxxii. 49, 50. Lo, it is no more than—*Go up and die.* Should it have been but to go a day's journey in the wilderness to sacrifice, it could have been no otherwise expressed, or as if it were all one to go up to Sinai to meet with God, and to go up to Nebo and die.

Neither is it otherwise with us; only the difference is, that Moses must first see the land of promise, and then die, whereas we first die, and then see the promised land.

Sect. IV.—*Comfort from the common condition of men.*

Thou art troubled with the fear of death: What reason hast thou to be afflicted with that which is the common condition of mankind? Remember, my son, the words of Joshua, the victorious leader of God's people: *Behold, this day,* saith he, *I am going the way of all the earth,* Josh. xxiii. 14.

If all the earth go this way, couldst thou be so fond as to think there should be a by-path left for thee, wherein thou mayest tread alone? Were it so that monarchs and princes, that patriarchs, prophets, apostles were allowed an easier passage out of the world, thou mightest perhaps find some pretence of reason to repine at a painful dissolution; but now, since all go one way, and, as the wise philosopher[1] says, those which are unequal in their birth are in their deaths equal, there can be no ground for a discontented

[1] Sen. Ep. 91. [impares nascimur, pares morimur.]

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murmur. Grudge if thou wilt that thou art a man, grudge not that being a man thou must die, Ps. lxxxix. 48; Ps. xc. 3, 5, 7.

It is true, that those whom the last day shall find alive shall not die, but they shall be changed; but this change of theirs shall be no other than an analogical death, wherein there shall be a speedy consumption of all our corrupt and drossy parts, so as the pain must be so much the more intense by how much it is more short than in the ordinary course of death. Briefly, that change is a death, and our death is a change, as Job styles it, Job xiv. 14: the difference is not in the pain, but in the speed of the transaction.

"Fear not," then, "the sentence of death: remember them that have been before thee, and that come after; for this is the sentence of the Lord over all flesh," Ecclus. xli. 3.

SECT. V.—*Death not feared by some.*

Thou fearest death: so do not infants, children, distracted persons; as the philosopher[k] observes. Why should use of reason render us more cowardly than defect of reason doth them?

Thou fearest that which some others wish. "O death, how acceptable is thy sentence to the needy, and to him whose strength faileth, that is now in the last age, and is vexed with all things, and to him that despaireth, and hath lost patience!" Ecclus xli. 2. *Wherefore is light given,* saith Job, *to him that is in misery, and life unto the bitter in soul? which long for death, but it cometh not; and dig for it more than for hid treasures; which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad, when they can find the grave?* Job iii. 20, 21, 22.

How many are there that invite the violence of death, and if he refuse it, do, as Ignatius threatened he would do to the lions, force his assault! Death is the same to all; the difference is in the disposition of the entertainers. Couldst thou look upon death with their eyes, he should be as welcome to thee as he is unto them. At the least, why shouldst thou not labour to have thy heart so wrought upon that this face of death, which seems lovely and desirable to some, may not appear over terrible to thee?

SECT. VI.—*Our deathday better than our birthday.*

Thou art afraid to die: couldst thou then have been capable of the use of reason, thou wouldst have been more afraid of

[k] Sen. Ep. 36. [nec infantes, nec pueros, nec mente lapsos, &c.]

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coming into the world than thou art now of going out; for why should we be more afraid of the better than of the worse?

Better is the day of death than the day of one's birth, saith the Preacher, Eccl. vii. 1. Better every way. Our birth begins our miseries, our death ends them; our birth enters the best of men into a wretched world; our death enters the good into a world of glory.

Certainly, were it not for our infidelity, as we came crying into the world, so we should go singing out of it. And if some have solemnized their birthday with feasting and triumph, the Church of old hath bestowed that name and cost upon the death's day of her martyrs and saints.

Sect. VII.—*The sting of death pulled out.*

Thou abhorrest death, and fleest from it as from a serpent: but dost thou know that his sting is gone? What harm can there be in a stingless snake? Hast thou not seen or heard of some delicate dames that have carried them, thus corrected, in their bosom, for coolness, and for the pleasure of their smoothness? *The sting of death is sin*, 1 Cor. xv. 56. He may hiss and wind about us, but he cannot hurt us when that sting is pulled out. Look up, O thou believing soul, to thy blessed Saviour, who hath plucked out this sting of death; and happily triumph over it both for himself and thee! *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*

Sect. VIII.—*Death is but a parting to meet again.*

Thy soul and body, old companions, are loath to part: why man, it is but the forbearing their wonted society for a while; they do but take leave of each other till they meet again in the day of resurrection; and in the mean time they are both safe, and the better part happy.

It is commendable in the Jews, otherwise the worst of men, that they call their grave בֵּית חַיִּים, "the house of the living;" and when they return from the burial of their neighbours they pluck up the grass and cast it into the air, with those words of the Psalmist, *They shall flourish and put forth as the grass upon the earth*, Ps. lxxii. 16.

Did we not believe a resurrection of the one part and a reuniting of the other, we had reason to be utterly daunted with the thought of a dissolution: now we have no cause to be dismayed with a little intermission.

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Is it a heathen man or a Christian (such I wish he had been) whom I hear say, "The death which we so fear and flee from doth but respite life for a while, doth not take it away; the day will come which shall restore us to the light again[m]." Settle thy soul, my son, in this assurance, and thou canst not be discomforted with a necessary parting.

SECT. IX.—*Death is but a sleep.*

Thou art afraid of death: When thou art weary of thy day's labour, art thou afraid of rest?

Hear what thy Saviour, who is the Lord of life, esteems of death, *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth*, John xi. 11; and of Jairus's daughter, *The maid is not dead, but sleepeth*, Matt. ix. 24; Luke viii. 52.

Neither useth the Spirit of God any other language concerning his servants under the Old Testament; *Now shall I sleep in the dust*, saith holy Job, ch. vii. 21; and of David, *When thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers*, 2 Sam. vii. 12.

Nor yet under the New: *For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep*, saith the apostle, 1 Cor. xi. 30.

Lo, the philosophers of old were wont to call sleep the brother of death; but God says, death is no other than sleep itself; a sleep both sure and sweet. When thou liest down at night to thy repose, thou canst not be so certain to awake again in the morning, as when thou layest thyself down in death, thou art sure to awake in the morning of the resurrection. Out of this bodily sleep thou mayest be affrightedly startled with some noises of sudden horror, with some fearful dreams, with tumults or alarms of war; but here thou shalt rest quietly in the place of silence (Ps. xciv. 17), free from all inward and outward disturbances; while in the mean time thy soul shall see none but visions of joy and blessedness.

But, O the sweet and heavenly expression of our last rest, and the issue of our happy resuscitation, which our gracious apostle hath laid forth for the consolation of his mournful Thessalonians! *For if we believe*, saith he, *that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.* Lo, our belief is antidote enough against the worst of death. And why are we troubled with death when we believe that Jesus died? and what a triumph is this over death, that the same Jesus who died, rose again! and what a comfort it is, that the same Jesus who

[m] Sen. Ep. 36. [Mors quam pertimescimus ac recusamus, &c.]

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arose, shall both come again and bring all his with him in glory! and, lastly, what a strong cordial is this to all good hearts, that all those which die well do sleep in Jesus! Thou thoughtest, perhaps, of sleeping in the bed of the grave, and there indeed is rest: but he tells thee of sleeping in the bosom of Jesus, and there is immortality and blessedness. O blessed Jesu, *in thy presence is the fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.* Who would desire to walk in the world when he may sleep with Jesus?

Sect. X.—*Death sweetened to us by Christ.*

Thou fearest death: It is much on what terms and in what form death presents himself to thee: if as an enemy, (as that is somewhere his style, *the last enemy, death,*) thy unpreparation shall make him dreadful; thy readiness and fortitude shall take off his terror: if as a messenger of God to fetch thee to happiness, what reason hast thou to be afraid of thine own bliss?

It is one thing, what death is in himself, a privation of life; as such, nature cannot choose but abhor him: another thing, what he is by Christ made unto us, an introduction to life, an harbinger to glory. Why would the Lord of life have yielded unto death, and by yielding vanquished him, but that he might alter and sweeten death to us; and of a fierce tyrant make him a friend and benefactor? And if we look upon him thus changed, thus reconciled, how can we choose but bid him welcome?

Sect. XI.—*The painfulness of Christ's death.*

Thou art afraid of the pangs of death: there are those that have died without any great sense of pain: some we have known to have yielded up their souls without so much as a groan: and how knowest thou, my son, what measure God hath allotted to thee? Our death is a sea voyage, (so the apostle, *I desire to launch forth*[n]:) wherein some find a rough and tempestuous passage, others calm and smooth; such thine may prove, so as thy dissolution may be more easy than a fit of thy sickness.

But if thy God have determined otherwise, *Look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith,* Heb. xii. 2, the Son of God, the Lord of glory. See with what agonies he conflicted, what torments he endured in his death for thee. Look upon his bloody sweat, his bleeding temples, his furrowed back, his nailed hands and feet, his racked joints, his pierced side. Hear his strong

[n] Phil. i. 23. Ἀναλῦσαι.

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cries. Consider the shame, the pain, the curse of the cross, which he underwent for thy sake. Say whether thy sufferings can be comparable to his. He is a cowardly and unworthy soldier that follows his general sighing. Lo, these are the steps wherein thy God and Saviour hath trod before thee. Walk on courageously in this deep and bloody way, after a few paces thou shalt overtake him in glory; for, *If we suffer with him, we shall also reign together with him,* 2 Tim. ii. 12.

SECT. XII.—*The vanity and miseries of life.*

Thou shrinkest at the thought of death: is it not for that thou hast overvalued life, and made thy home on earth? Delicate persons that have pampered themselves at home are loath to stir abroad, especially upon hard and uncouth voyages. Perhaps it is so with thee.

Wherein I cannot but much pity thy mistaking, in placing thy contentment there, where a greater and wiser man could find nothing but vanity and vexation. Alas! what can be our exile, if this be our home? What woful entertainment is this to be enamoured on! What canst thou meet with here but distempered humours, hard usages, violent passages, bodily sicknesses, sad complaints, hopes disappointed, frequent miscarriages, wicked plots, cruel menaces, deadly executions, momentary pleasures sauced with lasting sorrows; lastly, shadows of joy and real miseries? Are these the things that so bewitch thee, that when death calls at thy door, thou art ready to say to it, as the devil said to our Saviour, *Art thou come to torment me before the time?* Matt. viii. 29. Are these those winning contentments that cause thee to say of the world, as Peter said of Mount Tabor, *Master, it is good for us to be here?* Matt. xvii. 4.

If thou have any faith in thee, (and what dost thou profess to be a Christian without it?) look up to the things of the other world, whither thou art going; and see whether that true life, pure joy, perfect felicity, and the eternity of all these, may not be worthy to draw up thy heart to a longing desire of the fruition of them, and a contemptuous disvaluation of all the earth can promise, in comparison of this infinite blessedness.

It was one of the defects which our late noble and learned philosopher, the lord Verulam[o], found in our physicians, that they do not study those remedies that might procure *εὐθανασίαν*, the

[o] Lord Bacon, his "Advancement of Learning." [B. iv. c. 2.]

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"easy passage" of their patients, since they must needs die, through the gates of death. Such helps I must leave to the care of the skilful sages of nature; the use whereof I suppose must be with much caution, lest while they endeavour to sweeten death they shorten life. But let me prescribe and commend to thee, my son, the true spiritual means of thine happy euthanasia; which can be no other than this faithful disposition of the labouring soul, that can truly say, *I know whom I have believed,* 2 Tim. i. 12; *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day,* chap. iv. 7, 8.

SECT. XIII.—*Examples of courageous resolutions in others.*

Thou startest back at the mention of death: how canst thou but blush to read of that heathen martyr, Socrates, who, when the message of death was brought to him, could applaud the news as most joyful[p]? or of a cardinal of Rome, (who yet expected a tormenting purgatory,) that received the intimation of his approaching death with *Buona nuova, buona nuova, O che buona nuova è questa*[q]*?* Is not this their confidence thy shame; who, believing that *when our earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,* 2 Cor. v. 1; yet shrinkest at the motion of taking the possession of it? Canst thou, with dying Mithridates, when he took his unwilling farewell of the world, cry out, "O light!" when thou art going to a light more glorious than this thou leavest: than[r] [which] the sun is more weak than a rush candle?

It is our infidelity, my son, it is our mere infidelity, that makes us unwilling to die. Did we think, according to the cursed opinion of some fanatic persons, that the soul sleeps as well as the body, from the moment of the dissolution till the day of resurrection; or, did we doubt lest we should wander to unknown places, where we cannot be certain of the entertainment: or, did we fear a scorching trial, upon the emigration, in flames little inferior, for the time, to those of hell; there were some cause for

[p] Plato Phædone.

[q] F. Coffin. de Morte Bellarm., p. 28.

[r] The third folio reads this sentence, (without any meaning), "than the sun is more weak than a rush candle." I have restored the passage as it stands in the original edition, 12mo. 1646.—PRATT. [The reading adopted by Pratt is unintelligible. That of the third folio, with the insertion made above, seems to be preferable.]

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us to tremble at the approach of death: but now that we can boldly say with the Wise Man, "The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seem to die: and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction: but they are in peace," Wisd. iii. 1, 2, 3: O thou of little faith, why fearest thou? Why dost thou not chide thyself, as that dying saint did of old, "Go forth, my soul, go boldly forth; what art thou afraid of?"

Lo, the angels of God are ready to receive thee, and to carry thee up to thy glory: neither shalt thou sooner have left this wretched body than thou shalt be possessed of thy God: after a momentary darkness cast upon nature, thou shalt enjoy the beatifical vision of the glorious God: be not afraid to be happy; but say, out of faith, that which Jonah said in anger, *It is better for me to die than to live,* Jonah iv. 3.

SECT. XIV.—*The happy advantages of death.*

"I am afraid to die:" this is the voice of nature: but wilt thou hear what grace saith? *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* If therefore mere nature reign in thee, thou canst not but be affrighted with death: but if true grace be prevalent in thy soul, that guest shall not be unwelcome.

Was ever any man afraid of profit and advantage? such is death to the faithful. Whosoever he be that finds Christ to be his life shall be sure to find death his gain for that he is thereby brought to a more full and near communion with Christ: whereas before he enjoyed his Saviour only by the dim apprehension of his faith, now he doth clearly and immediately enjoy that glorious presence which only makes blessedness.

This is it which causeth death to change his copy, and renders him, who is of himself formidable, pleasing and beneficial: *I desire to depart, and to be with Christ,* Phil. i. 23, saith the man, who was wrapt up to the third heaven. Had it been only departing, surely he had had no such great edge to it; but, *to depart and be with Christ* is that which ravisheth his soul.

When the heathen Socrates was to die for his religion he comforted himself with this, that he should go to the place where he should see Orpheus, Homer, Musæus, and the other worthies of the former ages. Poor man! could he have come to have known *God manifested in the flesh, and received up into glory,* 1 Tim.

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iii. 16, and there, in that glorified flesh, sitting at the right hand of Majesty; could he have attained to know the blessed order of the cherubim and seraphim, angels, archangels, principalities, and powers, and the rest of the most glorious hierarchy of heaven; could he have been acquainted with that celestial choir of the *spirits of just men made perfect*, Heb. xii. 23; could he have reached to know the God and Father of spirits, the infinitely and incomprehensibly glorious Deity, whose presence transfuses everlasting blessedness into all those citizens of glory; and could he have known that he should have an undoubted interest, instantly upon his dissolution, in that infinite bliss: how much more gladly would be have taken off his hemlock, and how much more merrily would he have passed into that happier world!

All this we know; and are no less assured of it than of our present being: with what comfort, therefore, should we think of changing our present condition with a blessed immortality!

How sweet a song was that of old Simeon; *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation!* Luke ii. 29, 30. Lo, that which he saw by the eye of his sense, thou seest by the eye of thy faith; even *the Lord's Christ;* ver. 26: he saw him in weakness; thou seest him in glory: why shouldst thou not depart, not in peace only, but in joy and comfort?

How did the holy proto-martyr Stephen triumph over all the rage of his enemies, and the violent fury of death, when he had once seen *the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God!* Acts vii. 56. Lo, God offers the same blessed prospect to the eye of thy soul. Faith is the key that can open the heaven of heavens. Fix thine eyes upon that glorious and saving object, thou canst not but lay down thy body in peace; and send up thy soul into the hands of Him that bought it, with the sweet and cheerful recommendation of *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.*

CHAP. XVI.

COMFORTS AGAINST THE TERRORS OF JUDGMENT.

SECT. I.—*Aggravation of the fearfulness of the last judgment.*

THOU apprehendest it aright. Death is terrible; but judgment more: both these succeed upon the same decree; *It is*

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appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment, Heb. ix. 27.

Neither is it more terrible than less thought on. Death, because he strikes on all hands, and lays before us so many sad examples of mortality, cannot but sometimes take up our hearts; but the last judgment, having no visible proofs to force itself upon our thoughts, too seldom affrights us.

Yet who can conceive the terror of that day? before which, *the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood,* Acts ii. 20: that day, *which shall burn as an oven, when all the proud, and all that do wickedly, shall be as the stubble,* Mal. iv. 1: that day, *in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up,* 2 Pet. iii. 10: that day, *wherein the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,* 2 Thess. i. 7, 8: that day, *wherein the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire: for by fire, and by his sword, will the Lord plead with all flesh,* Isa. lxvi. 15, 16: that day, *wherein the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him; and shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and all nations shall be gathered before him,* Matt. xxv. 31, 32: that day, *wherein all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him,* Rev. i. 7: shortly, *that great and terrible day of the Lord,* (Joel ii. 31,) wherein, if the powers of heaven shall be shaken, how can the heart of man remain unmoved? wherein, if the world be dissolved, who can bear up?

Alas! we are ready to tremble at but a thunder-crack in a poor cloud, and at a small flash of lightning that glances through our eyes: what shall we do, when the whole frame of the heavens shall break in pieces, and when all shall be on a flame about our ears? O, *who may abide in the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?* Mal. iii. 2.

SECT. II—*Comfort from the condition of the elect.*

Yet be of good cheer, my son; amidst all this horror there is comfort.

Whether thou be one of those whom it shall please God to reserve alive upon earth to the sight of this dreadful day, He only

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knows, in whose hands our times are. This we are sure of, that we are upon the last hours of the last days. Justly do we spit in the faces of St. Peter's *scoffers, that say, Where is the promise of his coming?* 2 Pet. iii. 4: well knowing, that *the Lord is not slack, as some account slackness*, ver. 9, but that *he that shall come will come, and will not tarry*, Heb. x. 37. Well mayest thou live to see the Son of man come in the clouds of heaven, and to be an actor in this last scene of the world. If so, let not thy heart be dismayed with the expectation of these fearful things. Thy change shall be sudden and quick: one moment shall put off thy mortality, and clothe thee with that incorruption which shall not be capable of fear and pain. The majesty of this appearance shall add to thy joy and glory. Thou shalt then see *the Lord himself descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God*, 1 Thess. iv. 16. Thou shalt see thyself, and *those* other *which are alive and remain*, to be *caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so* shalt thou *be ever with the Lord*, ver. 17. Upon this assurance, how justly may the apostle subjoin, *Wherefore comfort one another with these words!* ver. 18. Certainly, if ever there were comfort to be had in any words, not of men or angels only, but of the ever-living God, the God of truth, these are they that can and will afford it to our trembling souls.

But, if thou be one of the number of those whom God hath determined to call off beforehand, and by a faithful death to prevent the great day of his appearance; here is nothing for thee, but matter of a *joy unspeakable and full of glory;* for *those that sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him*, 1 Thess. iv. 14. They shall be part of that glorious train which shall attend the majesty of the great Judge of the world, 1 Cor. vi. 2: yea, they shall be co-assessors to the Lord of heaven and earth in this awful judicature, as sitting upon the bench when guilty men and angels shall be at the bar, ver. 3. *To him that overcometh*, saith the Lord Christ, *will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne*, Rev. iii. 21. What place then is here for any terror; since the more state and heavenly magnificence, the more joy and glory!

SECT. III.—*Awe more fit for thoughts of judgment than fear.*

Thou art afraid to think of judgment: I had rather thou shouldst be awful than timorous.

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When St. Paul discoursed of the *judgment to come*, it is no marvel that Felix trembled, Acts xxiv. 25; but the same apostle, when he had pressed to his Corinthians the certainty and generality of our appearance before the judgment seat of Christ, *that every one may receive the things done in his body, whether good or evil;* addeth, *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest to God*, &c., 2 Cor. v. 10, 11.

Lo, the holiest man may not be exempted from the dread, but from the slavish fear of the great Judge. We know his infinite justice: we are conscious to ourselves of our manifold failings: how can we lay these two together and not fear? But this fear works not in us a malignant kind of repining at the severe tribunal of the Almighty; as commonly, whom we fear we hate; but rather a careful endeavour so to approve ourselves, that we may be acquitted by him, and appear blameless in his presence.

How justly may we tremble when we look upon our own actions, our own deserts! but how confidently may we appear at that bar, when we are beforehand assured of a discharge! *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord*, Rom. v. 1. When we think of an universal conflagration of the world, how can we but fear? But when we think of an happy *restitution of all things* (Acts iii. 21.) in this day, how can we but rejoice in trembling?

SECT. IV.—*In that great and terrible day, our Advocate is our Judge.*

Thou quakest at the expectation of the last judgment: surely the very majesty of that great assize must needs be formidable. And if the very delivery of the Law on Mount Sinai were with so dreadful a pomp of thunder and lightning, of fire, smoke, earthquakes, that the Israelites were half dead with fear in receiving it; with what terrible magnificence shall God come to require an account of that Law at the hands of the whole sinful generation of mankind!

Represent unto thy thoughts that which was showed of old to the prophet Daniel in vision. Imagine that thou sawest *the Ancient of days sitting upon a throne like the fiery flame, a fiery stream issuing and coming forth from before him: thousand thousands ministering unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him: the judgment set, and the books opened*, Dan. vii. 9, 10. Or, as John, the Daniel of the New Testament,

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saw *a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away; and the dead, both small and great, standing before God; and the books opened: and the dead judged out of those things which were written in those books, according to their works*, Rev. xx, 11, 12. Let the eyes of thy mind see beforehand that which these bodily eyes shall once see, and tell me how thou feelest thyself affected with a sight of such a Judge, such an appearance, such a process: and if thou findest thyself in a trembling condition, cheer up thyself with this, that thy Judge is thine Advocate; that upon that throne there sits not greater majesty than Mercy. It is thy Saviour that shall sentence thee.

How safe art thou then under such hands! Canst thou fear that he will doom thee to death who died to give thee life? Canst thou fear he will condemn thee for those sins which he hath given his blood to expiate? Canst thou fear the rigour of that justice which he hath so fully satisfied? Canst thou misdoubt the miscarriage of that soul which he hath so dearly bought?

No, my son, all this divine state and magnificence makes for thee. Let those guilty and impenitent souls, who have *heaped unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath*, Rom. ii. 5, quake at the glorious majesty of the Son of God; for whom *nothing remains but a fearful expectation of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries*, Heb. x. 26, 27. But for thee, who art not only reconciled unto God by the mediation of the Son of his love, but art also incorporated into Christ, and made a true limb of his mystical body; thou art bidden, together with all the faithful, to *look up, and lift up thy head; for now the day of thy redemption is come*, Luke xxi. 28; Eph. iv. 30.

And, indeed, how canst thou do other, since, by virtue of this blessed union with thy Saviour, this glory is thine? every member hath an interest in the honour of the Head.

Rejoice therefore in the day of the Lord Jesus, Phil. ii. 17, 18: and when all the tribes of the earth shall wail, (Rev. i. 7,) do thou sing and rejoice, and call to the heavens and the earth to bear thee company; *Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea make a noise, and all that is therein. Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: and with righteousness to judge the world, and the people with his truth*, Psalm xcvi. 11, 12, 13.

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SECT. V.—*Frequent meditation and due preparation the remedies of our fear.*

Thou art affrighted with the thought of that great day: think of it oftener and thou shalt less fear it. It will come both surely and suddenly; let thy frequent thoughts prevent it. It will come as a thief in the night, without warning, without noise; let thy careful vigilance always expect it, and thy soul shall be sure not to be surprised, not to be confounded. Thine audit is both sure and uncertain: sure, that it will be; uncertain, when it will be. If thou wilt approve thyself a good steward, have thine account always ready: set thy reckoning still even betwixt God and thy soul; *Blessed is the servant whom his master shall find so doing*, Matt. xxiv. 46. Look upon these heavens and this earth as dissolving; and think with Jerome, that thou hearest the last trump, and the voice of the archangel shrilling in thine ears, as once thou shalt, *Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment.* Shortly, let it be thy main care *to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity*, Titus ii. 12, 13, 14: *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like to his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself*, Phil. iii. 21.

CHAP. XVII.

AGAINST THE FEARS OF OUR SPIRITUAL ENEMIES.

SECT. I.—*The great power of evil spirits, and their restraint.*

THOU art affrighted at the thought of thy spiritual enemies: no marvel: neither earth nor hell hath any thing equally formidable. Those three things which are wont to make enmity dreadful and dangerous (power, malice, subtlety) are met in them: neither is it easy to say in which of these they are most eminent. Certainly, were we to be matched with them on even hand, there were just cause, not of fear only, but of despair.

"I could tremble," thou sayest, "to think that Satan hath done what he can do: what contestation he enabled the Egyptian sorcerers to hold with Moses: how they turned every man his rod into a serpent, so as they seemed to have the advantage, for the time, of many serpents crawling and hissing in Pharaoh's pavement, for one, Exod. vii. 11, 12; how they turned the waters into blood,

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ver. 22; how they brought frogs upon the land of Egypt, ch. viii. 7; as if thus far the power of hell would presume to hold competition with heaven: what furious tempests he raises in the air; as that which, from the wilderness, beat upon the four corners of the house of Job's eldest son, and overthrew it, Job i. 19; lo, Job was *the greatest man in the east*, Job i. 3; his heir did not dwell in a cottage: that strong fabric could not stand against this hurricane of Satan: what fearful apparitions he makes in the upper regions: what great wonders he doth, causing fire to come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, Rev. xiii. 13: lastly, what grievous tyranny he exerciseth upon all *the children of disobedience*," Eph. v. 6.

Couldst thou look for any less, my son, from those whom the Spirit of God himself styles *principalities, and powers*, and *rulers of the darkness of this world*, and *spiritual wickednesses in high places*, and *the prince of the power of the air?* Eph. vi. 12; ii. 2. Surely it were no mastery to be a Christian, if we had not powerful opposites.

But dost thou not withal consider, that all this power is by concession, and the exercise of it but with permission, with limitation? What power can there be in any creature which is not derived from the Almighty? This measure the Infinite Creator was pleased to communicate to them as angels, which they retain and exercise still as devils; their damnation hath stripped them of their glory, but we know not of how much of their strength.

And seest thou not how their power is bounded? Those that could in appearance turn their rods into serpents, could not keep all their serpents from being devoured of that one serpent of Moses: those that could bring frogs upon Egypt cannot bring a baser creature, lice: those that were suffered to bring frogs shall not have power to take them away, Exod vii. 12; viii. 18, 19; 8–11. Restrained powers must know their limits; and we, knowing them, must set limits to our fears. A lion chained up can do less harm than a cur let loose. What is it to thee how powerful the evil spirits are, while they are, by an overruling power, tied up to their stake that they cannot hurt thee?

Sect. II.—*The fear of the number of evil spirits, and the remedy of it.*

Thy fears are increased with their number; they are as many as powerful. One demoniac was possessed with a legion; how

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many legions then shall we think there are to tempt those millions of men which live upon the face of the earth, whereof no one is free from their continual solicitations to evil! That holy man, whom our counterfeit hermits would pretend to imitate in the vision of his retiredness, saw the air full of them, and of their snares for mankind; and were our eyes as clear as his, we might perhaps meet with the same prospect:—

But be not dismayed, my son. Couldst thou borrow the eyes of the servant of a holier master, thou shouldst see that *there are more with us than they that are against us*, 2 Kings vi. 16. Thou shouldst see the blessed angels of God pitching their tents about thee, as the more powerful, vigilant, constant guardians of thy soul; lo, these are those valiant ones which *stand about thy bed: they all hold swords, being expert in war: every one hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night*, Cant. iii. 7, 8.

Fear not therefore, but make *the Lord, even the Most High, thy habitation.* Then *there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone*, Psalm xci. 9—12; yea, and besides this safe indemnity, *Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet*, ver. 13.

In secular enmity, true valour may be oppressed, will not easily be daunted with multitude: *I will not be afraid of ten thousand*, saith David, Ps. iii. 6. *They came about me like bees; but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them*, Ps. cxviii. 12. It was a brave resolution in that general, who, when one of his soldiers could tell him that the cloud of Persian arrows shot at them darkened the sun: "Be of good cheer," said he, "we shall fight in the shade."

Answerable whereunto was that heroical determination of Luther, who, after his engagements, against all threats and dissuasions, would go into the city of Worms, though there were as many devils in it as tiles upon their houses. And why should not we imitate this confidence? What if there were as many devils in the air as there are spires of grass on the earth? *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, though*

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the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, Ps. xlvi. 1, 2. *Behold, God is our salvation; we will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is our strength and our song; he also is become our salvation,* Isa. xii. 2. *Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him. Like as the smoke vanisheth, so shalt thou drive them away,* Ps. lxviii. 1, 2.

Sect. III.—*The malice of the evil spirits, and our fears thereof remedied.*

But O the malice of those infernal spirits, implacable and deadly, whose trade is temptation and accusation, whose delight is torment, whose music is shrieks and howlings, and groans and gnashing, and whose main drift is no less than the eternal death and damnation of miserable mankind!—

Why should we, my son, expect other from him who is professedly the manslayer from the beginning; that carries nothing but destruction both in his name and nature; that *goes about* continually, *like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour?*

Surely this malignity is restless; neither will take up with any thing on this side hell:—

But comfort thyself in this, that in spite of all the malice of hell thou art safe. Dost thou not know that there stands by thee the victorious *Lion of the tribe of Judah,* whom that infernal ravener dare not look in the face? Dost thou not remember, that when the sentence was pronounced of eternal enmity between the Seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, it was with this doom, *it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel?* Gen. iii. 15. Lo, a bruise of a man's heel is far from the heart, but a bruise of the serpent's head is mortal; there his sting, there his life lies. Neither did the Seed of the woman, Christ Jesus, this for himself, who was infinitely above all the power and malice of the devil; but for us, the impotent and sinful seed of man: *The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet,* saith the blessed apostle, Rom. xvi. 20; *under your feet,* not under his own only; of whom God the Father had long before said, *Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool,* Ps. cx. 1.

Yea, what do I speak of the future? Already is this great work done; already is this great work achieved; for the Lord of life, *having spoiled principalities and powers* hath *made a*

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show of them openly, triumphing over them on his cross, Col. ii. 15. Lo, all the powers of hell were dragged after this glorious conqueror, when he was advanced upon that triumphant chariot.

Look therefore, my son, upon these hellish forces as already vanquished, and know that *in all things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us*, Rom. viii. 37. Only do thou, by the power of thy faith, apply unto thyself this great work that thy victorious Saviour hath done for the salvation of all the world of believers.

SECT. IV.—*The great subtlety of evil spirits, and the remedy of the fear of it.*

Power without malice were harmless, and malice without power were impotent; but when both are combined together they are dreadful. But whereas malice hath two ways to execute mischief, either force or fraud, the malice of Satan prevails more by this latter; so as the subtlety of these malignant spirits is more pernicious than their power. In regard of his power, he is a *lion;* in regard of his subtlety, he is a *serpent*, Gen. iii. 1: yea, that *old serpent*, (Rev. xii. 9; xx. 2.) whose craft must needs be more closely increased by the age and experience of so many thousand years:—

So much the more careful ought we to be, my son, *lest Satan should get an advantage of us*, 2 Cor. ii. 11. This is that he seeks, and if our spiritual wisdom and circumspection be not the more, will be sure to find.

It is a great word, and too high for us, which the apostle speaks; *For we are not ignorant of Satan's devices*, 2 Cor. ii. 11. Alas, he hath a thousand stratagems that our weak simplicity is never able to reach unto! The wisest of us knows not the deceitfulness of his own heart, much less can he dive into the plots of hell that are against us. We hear and are forewarned of *the wiles of the devil*, Eph. vi. 11; but what his special machinations are, how can we know, much less prevent? Even *the children of this world*, saith our Saviour, *are in their generation wiser than the children of light*, Luke xvi. 8; how much more crafty is their father, from whom their cunning is derived! Be as mean as thou wilt, my son, in thine own eyes; say with Agur the son of Jakeh, *Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man: I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy*, Prov. xxx. 2, 3.

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But whatever thou art in thyself, know what thou art or mayest be in thy God. Consider what the man after God's own heart sticks not to profess; *Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for thou art ever with me,* Ps. cxix. 98. Lo, the *spirit of wisdom* (Deut. xxxiv. 9; Eph. i. 17.) is ours: and he who is the eternal Wisdom of the Father is *made unto us wisdom*, as well as righteousness, 1 Cor. i. 30: and he who overrules hell hath said, *The gates of hell shall not prevail against* his Church. What are the gates of hell but the deep plots and consultations of those infernal powers?

The serpent is the known emblem of subtlety. The serpents of the Egyptian sorcerers were all devoured by Moses's serpent; wherefore, but to show us that all the crafty counsels and machinations of hellish projectors are easily destroyed by the power and wisdom of the Almighty? when all was done, it was the rod of God that swallowed them all; and was yet still itself when they were vanquished; so as that whereby Satan thought to have won most honour to himself, ended in his shame and loss.

What an infinite advantage did the powers of darkness think to have made in drawing our first parents, by their subtle suggestions, into sin, and thereby into perdition; as imagining, "Either mankind shall not be, or shall be ours!" The incomprehensible wisdom and mercy of our God disappointed their hopes, and took occasion by man's fall to raise him up to a greater glory; and so ordered it, that the serpent's nibbling at the heel cost him the breaking of his head.

What trophies did that wicked spirit think to erect upon the ruins of miserable Job! and how was he baffled by the patience of that saint! and how was that saint doubled, both in his estate and honour, by his conquering patience!

How confidently did the subtlety of hell say, concerning the Son of God exhibited in the flesh, *This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours!* Matt. xxi. 38; Mark xii. 7; Luke xx. 14. How sure work did they think they had made, when they saw him, through their subtle procurement, nailed to the cross, and dying upon that tree of shame and curse; when they saw him laid dead under a sealed and guarded gravestone! And now, behold, even now begins their confusion and his triumph; now doth the Lord of life begin to trample upon death and hell, and to perfect his own glory and man's redemption by his most glorious resurrection.

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And as it was with the Head, so it is with the members. When Satan hath done his worst, they are holier upon their sins, and happier by their miscarriages. God finds out a way to improve their evils to advantage, and teaches them of these vipers to make sovereign treacles, and safe and powerful trochischs.

Shortly, the temptations of Satan, sent out from his power, malice, subtlety, are no other than *fiery darts*, for their suddenness, impetuosity, penetration. If we can but hold out *the shield of faith* before us, they shall not be *quenched* only, but retorted into the face of him that sends them, Eph. vi. 16; and we shall, with the Chosen Vessel, find and profess, that *in all things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us*, Rom. viii. 37; and in a bold defiance of all the powers of darkness shall say *I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*, vv. 38, 39: to whom be all honour, glory, praise, power, and dominion, now and for evermore.

CHAP. XVIII.

THE UNIVERSAL RECEIPT FOR ALL MALADIES.

THESE are, my son, special compositions of wholesome receipts for the several maladies of thy soul; wherein it shall be my happiness, to have suggested unto thee such thoughts as may any whit avail to the alleviation of thy sorrows.

But there is an universal remedy, which a skilfuller physician hath ordained for all thy grievances, and I from his hand earnestly recommend to thee: *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray*, James v. 13. Lo here the great and sovereign *panpharmacum* of the distressed soul, which is able to give ease to all the forementioned complaints!

Art thou cast down upon thy sick bed? *Call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray*, James v. 14. This was Hezekiah's receipt when he was *sick unto death: he turned his face to the wall and prayed*, 2 Kings xx. 1, 2. This was David's receipt: *Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are vexed*, Ps. vi. 2. Take therefore the counsel of the Wise Man: "My son, in thy sickness be not negligent, but pray unto the Lord, and he will make thee whole, Ecclus. xxxviii. 9.

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Art thou soul sick? Pray. So did holy David: *The sorrows of hell compassed me about; and the snares of death prevented me. In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God,* Ps. xviii. 5, 6; cxvi. 3, 4.

Art thou infested with importunate temptations? Pray. So did St. Paul, when the messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him: *Thrice I besought the Lord that it might depart from me,* 2 Cor. xii. 8. So did David: *While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted, thy fierce wrath goeth over me,* Ps. lxxxviii. 15, 16: *But unto thee have I cried, O Lord; and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee,* v. 13.

Art thou disheartened with the weakness of grace? Pray. So did David: *I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart. Lord, all my desire is before thee,* Ps. xxxviii. 8, 9.

Art thou afflicted with the slanders of evil tongues? Pray. So did David: *The mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue,* Ps. cix. 2. *Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise,* ver. 1.

Art thou grieved or affrighted with the public calamities of war, famine, pestilence? Pray. So good Jehoshaphat presseth God with his gracious promise made to Solomon, 2 Chron. vii. 13, 14, 15. *If, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we stand before this house, and in thy presence, and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help,* 2 Chron. xx. 9; and shuts up his zealous supplication with, *neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee,* ver. 12.

Art thou afflicted with the loss of friends? Pray, and have recourse to thy God, as Ezekiel, when Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died: *Then fell I down upon my face, and cried with a loud voice, and said, Ah Lord God! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?* Ezek. xi. 13.

Art thou distressed with poverty? Pray. So did David: *I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me. I became also a reproach to them: when they that looked upon me shaked their heads. Help me, O Lord my God: O save me according to thy mercy,* Ps. cix. 22, 25, 26.

Art thou imprisoned? Pray. So did Jonah when he was shut up within the living walls of the whale: *I cried by reason of my affliction unto the Lord,* Jonah ii. 2. So did Asaph: *Let the*

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sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of thy power preserve thou them that are appointed to die, Ps. lxxix. 11.

Art thou driven from thy country? Pray. This is the remedy prescribed by Solomon, in his supplication to God: If thy people be carried away *into a land far off or near; yet if they bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried, and turn and pray to thee in the land of their captivity: if they return to thee with all their hearts, and pray toward the land which thou gavest to their forefathers, &c. Then hear thou from heaven their prayer, and their supplications,* 2 Chron. vi. 36—39.

Art thou bereaved of thy bodily senses? Make thy address to him that said, *Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, and the deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I, the Lord?* Exod. iv. 11. Cry aloud to him, with Bartimæus, *Lord, that I may receive my sight,* Mark x. 47, 51. And if thou be hopeless of thine outward sight, yet pray, with the Psalmist, *O Lord, open thou mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of thy law,* Ps. cxix. 18.

Art thou afflicted with sterility? Pray. So did Isaac; Gen. xxv. 21. So did Hannah: *she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore;* and received a gracious answer, 1 Sam. i. 10; ii. 21.

Art thou troubled and weakened with want of rest? Pray. So did Asaph: *I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak,* Ps. lxxvii. 3, 4. *I cried to God with my voice, unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me,* ver. 1.

Dost thou droop under the grievances of old age? Pray. So did David: *O cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth,* Ps. lxxi. 9. *O God, thou hast taught me from my youth. Now also when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not,* vv. 17, 18.

Art thou troubled and dismayed with the fears of death? Pray. So did David: *My soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave. I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am as a man that hath no strength: free among the dead. Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps,* Ps. lxxxviii. 3—6. *But unto thee have I cried, O Lord; and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee,* ver. 13.

Dost thou tremble at the thought of judgment? So did the

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man after God's own heart: *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments*, Ps. cxix. 120. Look up with Jeremiah, and say to thy Saviour, *O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou hast redeemed my life: O Lord, judge thou my cause*, Lam. iii. 58, 59.

Lastly, art thou afraid of the power, malice, subtlety of thy spiritual enemies? Pray. So did David: *Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me*, Ps. lix. 1. *O hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked*, Ps. lxiv. 2. *Consider mine enemies; for they are many, and they hate me with cruel hatred. O keep my soul, and deliver me*, Ps. xxv. 19, 20. So did St. Paul pray, that he might be freed from the messenger of Satan, whose buffets he felt; and was answered with—*My grace is sufficient for thee*, 2 Cor. xii. 9. So he sues for all God's saints: *May the God of peace tread down Satan under your feet shortly*. Rom. xvi. 20.

Shortly, whatever evil it be that presseth thy soul, have speedy recourse to the throne of grace: pour out thine heart into the ears of *the Father of all mercies, and God of all comfort*, 2 Cor. i. 3, and be sure, if not of redress, yet of ease: we have his word for it, that cannot fail us: *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee; and thou shalt glorify me*, Ps. l. 15.

Fashionable suppliants may talk to God: but, be confident, he that can truly pray can never be truly miserable. Of ourselves, we lie open to all evils: our rescue is from above: and what intercourse have we with heaven but by our prayers? Our prayers are they that can deliver us from dangers, avert judgments, prevent mischiefs, procure blessings; that can obtain pardon for our sins, furnish us with strength against temptations, mitigate the extremity of our sufferings, sustain our infirmities, raise up our dejectedness, increase our graces, abate our corruptions, sanctify all good things to us, sweeten this bitterness of our afflictions, open the windows of heaven, shut up the bars of death, vanquish the power of hell. Pray; and be both safe and happy.

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HOLY RAPTURES;

OR,

PATHETICAL MEDITATIONS

OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST:

TOGETHER WITH

A TREATISE OF CHRIST MYSTICAL:

OR,

THE BLESSED UNION OF CHRIST AND HIS MEMBERS.

BY JOS. HALL, D.D., and B. N.

To the only honour and glory of his blessed Saviour and Redeemer; and to the comfort and benefit of all those members of his mystical body, which are still labouring and warfaring upon earth; JOSEPH HALL, their unworthiest servant, humbly dedicates this fruit of his old age.

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CHRIST MYSTICAL.

INTRODUCTORY.

SECT. I.—*How to be happy in the apprehending of Christ.*

THERE is not so much need of learning as of grace to apprehend those things which concern our everlasting peace. Neither is it our brain that must be set on work here, but our heart; for true happiness doth not consist in a mere speculation, but a fruition of good. However, therefore, there is excellent use of scholarship in all the sacred employments of divinity; yet in the main act, which imports salvation, skill must give place to affection. Happy is the soul that is possessed of Christ, how poor soever in all inferior endowments.

Ye are wide, O ye great wits, while you spend yourselves in curious questions and learned extravagancies. Ye shall find one touch of Christ more worth to your souls, than all your deep and laboursome disquisitions; one dram of faith more precious than a pound of knowledge. In vain shall ye seek for this in your books, if you miss it in your bosoms. If you know all things, and cannot truly say, *I know whom I have believed*, (2 Tim. i. 12,) you have but knowledge enough to know yourselves truly miserable.

Wouldst thou therefore, my son, find true and solid comfort in the hour of temptation, in the agony of death? make sure work for thy soul in the days of thy peace. Find Christ thine, and in the despite of hell thou art both safe and blessed.

Look not so much to an absolute Deity, infinitely and incomprehensibly glorious: alas! that Majesty, because perfectly and essentially good, is out of Christ no other than an enemy to thee. Thy sin hath offended his justice, which is himself: what hast thou to do with that dreadful power which thou hast provoked?

Look to that merciful and all-sufficient *Mediator betwixt God and man*, who is both God and man, *Jesus Christ the righteous*, 1 Tim. ii. 5; 1 John ii. 1. It is his charge and our duty, *Ye believe in God, believe also in me*, John xiv. 1.

Yet look not merely to the Lord Jesus, as considered in the notion of his own eternal being, as the Son of God, coequal and

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coessential to God the Father: but look upon him as he stands in reference to the sons of men. And herein also look not to him so much as a Lawgiver and a Judge; there is terror in such apprehension: but look upon him as a gracious Saviour and Advocate[a]. And lastly, look not upon him as in the generality of his mercy the common Saviour of mankind: what comfort were it to thee, that all the world except thyself were saved? but look upon him as the dear Redeemer of thy soul; as thine Advocate at the right hand of Majesty; as one with whom thou art, through his wonderful mercy, inseparably united.

Thus look upon him firmly and fixedly, so as he may never be out of thine eyes; and whatever secular objects interpose themselves betwixt thee and him, look through them as some slight mists, and terminate thy sight still in this blessed prospect. Let neither earth nor heaven hide them from thee, in whatsoever condition.

SECT. II.—*The honour and happiness of being united to Christ.*

And while thou art thus taken up, see if thou canst without wonder and a kind of ecstatical amazement behold the infinite goodness of thy God, that hath exalted thy wretchedness to no less than a blessed and indivisible union with the Lord of glory: so as thou who, in the sense of thy miserable mortality, mayest say *to corruption, Thou art my father; and to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister*, Job xvii. 14, canst now, through the privilege of thy faith, hear the Son of God say unto thee, *Thou art bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh*, Gen. ii. 23; Eph. v. 30.

Surely as we are too much subject to pride ourselves in these earthly glories, so we are too apt, through ignorance or pusillanimity, to undervalue ourselves in respect of our spiritual condition; we are far more noble and excellent than we account ourselves.

It is our faith that must raise our thoughts to a due estimation of our greatness; and must show us how highly we are descended, how royally we are allied, how gloriously estated. That only is it that must advance us to heaven, and bring heaven down to us: through the want of the exercise whereof it comes to pass, that, to the great prejudice of our souls, we are ready to think of Christ Jesus as a stranger to us; as one aloof off in another world, ap-

[a] Luther. in Gal.

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prehended only by fits in a kind of ineffectual speculation, without any lively feeling of our own interest in him; whereas we ought, by the powerful operation of this grace in our hearts, to find so heavenly an appropriation of Christ to our souls, as that every believer may truly say, "I am one with Christ; Christ is one with me."

Had we not good warrant for so high a challenge, it could be no less than a blasphemous arrogance, to lay claim to the royal blood of Heaven; but since it hath pleased the God of heaven so far to dignify our unworthiness, as in the multitude of his mercies to admit and allow us to be *partakers of the divine nature,* (2 Pet. i. 4,) it were no other than an unthankful stupidity not to lay hold on so glorious a privilege, and to go for less than God hath made us.

SECT. III.—*The kind and manner of this union with Christ.*

Know now, my son, that thou art upon the ground of all consolation to thy soul, which consists in this beatifical union with thy God and Saviour.

Think not therefore to pass over this important mystery with some transient and perfunctory glances; but let thy heart dwell upon it, as that which must stick by thee in all extremities, and cheer thee up when thou art forsaken of all worldly comforts.

Do not then conceive of this union as some imaginary thing, that hath no other being but in the brain, whose faculties have power to apprehend and bring home to itself far remote substances, possessing itself, in a sort, of whatsoever it conceives. Do not think it an union, merely virtual, by the participation of those spiritual gifts and graces which God worketh in the soul, as the comfortable effects of our happy conjunction with Christ. Do not think it an accidental union, in respect of some circumstances and qualities, wherein we communicate with him who is God and man; nor yet a metaphorical union, by way of figurative resemblance.

But know that this is a true, real, essential, substantial union, whereby the person of the believer is indissolubly united to the glorious person of the Son of God. Know that this union is not more mystical than certain; that in natural unions there may be more evidence, there cannot be more truth. Neither is there so firm and close an union betwixt the soul and body, as there is betwixt Christ and the believing soul; forasmuch as that may be severed by death, but this never.

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Away yet with all gross carnality of conceit. This union is true and really existent, but yet spiritual. And if some of the ancients have termed it natural and bodily, it hath been in respect to the subject united; our humanity to the two blessed natures of the Son of God met in one most glorious person; not in respect of the manner of the uniting.

Neither is it the less real, because spiritual. Spiritual agents neither have nor put forth any whit less virtue, because sense cannot discern their manner of working. Even the loadstone, though an earthen substance, yet when it is out of sight, whether under the table or behind a solid partition, stirreth the needle as effectually as if it were within view: shall not he contradict his senses that will say, "It cannot work, because I see it not?"

O Saviour, thou art more mine than my body is mine. My sense feels that present; but so, that I must lose it: my faith sees and feels thee so present with me, that I shall never be parted from thee.

SECT. IV.—*The resemblance of this union by the head and body.*

There is no resemblance whereby the Spirit of God more delights to set forth the heavenly union betwixt Christ and the believer, than that of the head and the body.

The head gives sense and motion to all the members of the body; and the body is one, not only by the continuity of all the parts held together with the same natural ligaments, and covered with one and the same skin, but much more by the animation of the same soul quickening that whole frame.

In the acting whereof, it is not the large extent of the stature, and distance of the limbs from each other, that can make any difference. The body of a child, that is but a span long, cannot be said to be more united than the vast body of a giantly son of Anak, whose height is as the cedars; and if we could suppose such a body as high as heaven itself, that one soul, which dwells in it and is diffused through all the parts of it, would make it but one entire body.

Right so it is with Christ and his Church. That one Spirit of his, which dwells in and enlivens every believer, unites all those far-distant members, both to each other and to their head, and makes them up into one true mystical body; so as now, every true believer may without presumption, but with all holy reverence and humble thankfulness, say to his God and Saviour, "Behold,

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Lord, I am, how unworthy soever, one of the limbs of thy body, and therefore have a right to all that thou hast, to all that thou doest; thine eyes see for me; thine ears hear for me; thine hand acts for me; thy life, thy grace, thy happiness is mine."

O the wonder of the two blessed unions! In the personal union it pleased God to assume and unite our human nature to the Deity: in the spiritual and mystical, it pleases God to unite the person of every believer to the person of the Son of God. Our souls are too narrow to bless God enough for these incomprehensible mercies: mercies, wherein he hath preferred us, be it spoken with all godly lowliness, to the blessed angels of heaven: *For verily he took not upon him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham*, Heb. ii. 16. Neither hath he made those glorious spirits members of his mystical body; but his saints, whom he hath, as it were, so incorporated, that they are become his body and he theirs; according to that of the divine apostle: *For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ*, 1 Cor. xii. 12.

SECT. V.—*This union set forth by the resemblance of the husband and wife.*

Next hereunto there is no resemblance of this mystery either more frequent or more full of lively expression than that of the conjugal union betwixt the husband and wife.

Christ is, as the Head, so the Husband of the Church; the Church and every believing soul is the spouse of this heavenly Bridegroom, whom he marrieth unto himself *for ever, in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies*, Isaiah lxii. 5; Hosea ii 19.

And this match, thus made up, fulfils that decretive word of the Almighty, *They twain shall be one flesh*, Eph. v. 31; Gen. ii. 24.

O happy conjunction of the second Adam, with her which was taken out of his most precious side! O heavenly and complete marriage! wherein God the Father brings and gives the bride, Gen. ii. 22. *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me*, saith Christ, John vi. 37; wherein God the Son receives the bride, as mutually partaking of the same nature, and can say, *This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh*, John i. 14; Gen. ii. 23; wherein God the Holy Ghost knits our wills in a full and glad consent to the full consummation of this blessed wedlock.

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And those whom God hath thus joined together, let no man (no devil can) put asunder.

What is there then which an affectionate husband can withhold from a dear wife? He that hath given himself to her, what can he deny to impart? He that hath made himself one with her, how can he be divided from his other self? Some wild fancies there are, that have framed the links of marriage of so brittle stuff, as that they may be knapt in sunder upon every slight occasion; but he that ordained it in paradise, for an earthly representation of this heavenly union betwixt Christ and his Church, hath made that and his own indissoluble.

Here is no contract in the future, which upon some intervenient accidents may be remitted; but, *I am my wellbeloved's, and my wellbeloved is mine,* Cant. vi. 3; ii. 16: and therefore each is so other's that neither of them is their own.

O the comfortable mystery of our uniting to the Son of God! *The wife hath not the power of her own body, but the husband,* 1 Cor. vii. 4. We are at thy disposing, O Saviour; we are not our own. Neither art thou so absolutely thine, as that we may not, through thine infinite mercy, claim an interest in thee. Thou hast given us such a right in thyself, as that we are bold to lay challenge to all that is thine; to thy love, to thy merits, to thy blessings, to thy glory. It was wont of old to be the plea of the Roman wives to their husbands, "Where thou art Caius, I am Caia:" and now in our present marriages we have not stuck to stay, "With all my worldly goods I thee endow." And if it be thus in our imperfect conjunctions here upon earth, how much more in that exquisite oneness which is betwixt thee, O blessed Saviour, and thy dearest spouse, the Church.

What is it then that can hinder us from a sweet and heavenly fruition of thee?

Is it the loathsome condition of our nature? thou sawest this before; and yet couldst say, when we were yet in our *blood, Live,* Ezek. xvi. 6. Had we not been so vile, thy mercy had not been so glorious. Thy free grace did all for us: thou washed*st* us *with water, and anointed*st us *with oil, and clothed*st us *with broidered work, and girded*st us *about with fine linen, and covered*st us *with silk, and decked*st us *with ornaments; and didst put bracelets upon* our *hands, and a chain on* our *neck, and jewels on* our *foreheads, and earrings on* our *ears, a beautiful crown on* our *heads,* Ezek. xvi. 9–12. What we had not, thou gavest;

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what thou didst not find, thou madest; that we might be a not unmeet match for the Lord of life.

Is it want of beauty? *Behold, I am black, but comely,* Cant. i. 5. Whatever our hue be in our own or others' eyes, it is enough that we are lovely in thine: *Behold, thou art fair, my beloved: behold, thou art fair, yea pleasant,* Cant. i. 16. *Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely, as Jerusalem,* vi. 4. *How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!* vii. 6. But, O Saviour, if thou take contentment in this poor unperfect beauty of thy spouse the Church, how infinite pleasure should thy spouse take in that absolute perfection that is in thee, who art all loveliness and glory! and if she have ravished thy heart with one of her eyes, Cant. v. 16; iv. 9, how much more reason hath her heart to be wholly ravished with both thine, which are so full of grace and amiableness! and in this mutual fruition what can there be other than perfect blessedness?

SECT. VI.—*The resemblance of this union, by the nourishment and the body.*

The Spirit of God, well knowing how much it imports us both to know and feel this blessed union, whereof himself is the only worker, labours to set it forth to us by the representations of many of our familiar concernments which we daily find in our meats and drinks, in our houses, in our gardens and orchards.

That which is nearest to us is our nourishment. What can be more evident than that the bread, the meat, the drink that we receive is incorporated into us, and becomes part of the substance whereof we consist? so as, after perfect digestion, there can be no distinction betwixt what we are and what we took. While that bread was in the bin, and that meat in the shambles, and that drink in the vessel, it had no relation to us, nor we to it; yea, while all these were on the table, yea, in our mouths, yea, newly let down into our stomachs, they are not fully ours, for upon some nauseating dislike of nature they may yet go the same way they came. But if the concoction be once fully finished, now they are so turned into our blood and flesh, that they can be no more distinguished from our former substance than that could be divided from itself; now they are dispersed into the veins, and concorporated to the flesh; and no part of our flesh and blood is more ours than that which was lately the blood of the grapes, and the flesh of this fowl or that beast.

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O Saviour, thou who art truth itself hast said, *I am the living bread that came down from heaven*, John vi. 51: *My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed*, ver. 55; and thereupon hast most justly inferred, *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him*, ver. 56: and as a necessary consequent of this spiritual manducation, *Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life*, ver. 54.

Lo, thou art bread indeed; not the common bread, but manna: not the Israelitish manna; alas, that fell from no higher than the region of clouds, and they that ate it died with it in their mouths; but thou art the living bread that came down from the heaven of heavens, of whom whosoever eats lives for ever. Thy flesh is meat, not for our stomachs, but for our souls; our faith receives and digests thee, and makes thee ours, and us thine.

Our material food in these corruptible bodies runs into corruption; thy spiritual food nourisheth purely, and strengthens us to a blessed immortality.

As for this material food, many an one longs for it that cannot get it; many an one hath it that cannot eat it; many eat it that cannot digest it; many digest it into noxious and corrupt humours; all that receive it do but maintain a perishing life, if not a languishing death. But this flesh of thine, as it was never withheld from any true appetite, so it never yields but wholesome and comfortable sustenance to the soul; never hath any other issue than an everlasting life and happiness.

O Saviour, whensoever I sit at mine own table let me think of thine; whensoever I feed on the bread and meat that is set before me, and feel myself nourished by that repast, let me mind that better sustenance which my soul receives from thee, and find thee more one with me than that bodily food.

Sect. VII.—*This union resembled by the branch and the stock, the foundation and the building.*

Look but into thy garden or orchard, and see the vine, or any other fruit-bearing tree, how it grows and fructifies. The branches are loaden with increase: whence is this, but that they are one with the stock, and the stock one with the root? Were either of these severed, the plant were barren and dead. The branch hath not sap enough to maintain life in itself, unless it receive it from the body of the tree; nor that, unless it derived it from the root; nor that, unless it were cherished by the earth.

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Lo, *I am the vine*, saith our Saviour, *ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered*, John xv. 5, 6. Were the branch and the body of the tree of different substances, and only closed together in some artificial contiguity, no fruit could be expected from it: it is only the abiding in the tree, as a living limb of that plant, which yields it the benefit and issue of vegetation. No otherwise is it betwixt Christ and his Church: the bough and the tree are not more of one piece than we are of one substance with our Saviour; and branching out from him, and receiving the sap of heavenly virtue from his precious root, we cannot but be acceptably fruitful.

But if the analogy seem not to be so full, for that the branch issues naturally from the tree, and the fruit from the branch, whereas we by nature have no part in the Son of God; take that clearer resemblance which the apostle fetches from the stock and the griff or scion. The branches of the wild olive (Rom. xi.) are cut off, and are graffed with choice scions of the good olive. Those imps grow, and are now by this incision no less embodied in that stock than if they had sprouted out by a natural propagation, neither can be any more separated from it than the strongest bough that nature puts forth. In the mean time, that scion alters the nature of that stock; and while the root gives fatness to the stock, and the stock yields juice to the scion, the scion gives goodness to the plant, and a specification to the fruit; so as, while the imp is now the same thing with the stock, the tree is different from what it was.

So it is betwixt Christ and the believing soul. Old Adam is our wild stock; what could that have yielded but either none or sour fruit? We are imped with the new man, Christ, that is now incorporated into us. We are become one with him. Our nature is not more ours than he is ours by grace. Now we bear his fruit, and not our own; our old stock is forgotten; all things are become new. Our natural life we receive from Adam; our spiritual life and growth from Christ; from whom, after the improvement of this blessed incision, we can be no more severed than he can be severed from himself.

Look but upon thy house (that from vegetative creatures thou mayest turn thine eyes to those things which have no life); if that be uniform, the foundation is not of a different matter from

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the walls: both those are but one piece; the superstructure is so raised upon the foundation as if all were but one stone.

Behold, Christ is the *chief corner stone, elect* and *precious*, 1 Pet. ii. 6: neither can there be *any other foundation laid than that which is laid* on him, 1 Cor. iii. 11. We are *lively stones, built up to a spiritual house*, on that sure and firm foundation, 1 Pet. ii. 5.

Some loose stones, perhaps, that lie unmortared upon the battlements, may be easily shaken down; but who ever saw a squared marble, laid by line and level in a strong wall upon a well-grounded base, fly out of his place by whatsoever violence; since both the strength of the foundation below and the weight of the fabric above have settled it in a posture utterly unmovable? Such is our spiritual condition. O Saviour, thou art our foundation; we are laid upon thee, and are therein one with thee. We can no more be disjoined from thy foundation than the stones of thy foundation can be disunited from themselves.

So then, to sum up all; as the head and members are but one body, as the husband and wife are but one flesh, as our meat and drink become part of ourselves, as the tree and branches are but one plant, as the foundation and walls are but one fabric; so Christ and the believing soul are indivisibly one with each other.

SECT. VIII.—*The certainty and indissolubleness of this union.*

Where are those then that go about to divide Christ from himself, Christ real from Christ mystical? yielding Christ one with himself, but not one with his Church; making the true believer no less separable from his Saviour than from the entireness of his own obedience; dreaming of the uncomfortable and self-contradicting paradoxes of the total and final apostasy of saints.

Certainly these men have never thoroughly digested the meditation of this blessed union whereof we treat.

Can they hold the believing soul a limb of that body whereof Christ is the Head, and yet imagine a possibility of dissolution? Can they affain to the Son of God a body that is unperfect? Can they think that body perfect that hath lost his limbs? Even in this mystical body the best joints may be subject to strains; yea, perhaps, to some painful and perilous luxation; but, as it was in the natural body of Christ, when it was in death most exposed to the cruelty of all enemies, that, upon an overruling providence not a bone of it could be broken, so it is still and ever with the

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spiritual; some scourgings and blows it may suffer, yea, perhaps some bruises and gashes; but no bone can be shattered in pieces, much less dissevered from the rest of the body. Were we left to ourselves, or could we be so much as in conceit sundered from the body whereof we are, alas! we are but as other men, subject to the same sinful infirmities, to the same dangerous and deadly miscarriages: but since it hath pleased the God of Heaven to unite us to himself, now it concerns him to maintain the honour of his own body by preserving us entire.

Can they acknowledge the faithful soul married in truth and righteousness to that celestial Husband, and made up into one flesh with the Lord of glory? and can they think of any bills of divorce written in heaven? Can they suppose that which, by way of type, was done in the earthly paradise, to be really undone in the heavenly? What an infinite power hath put together, can they imagine that a limited power can disjoin? Can they think sin can be of more prevalence than mercy? Can they think the unchangeable God subject to after-thoughts? Even the Jewish repudiations never found favour in heaven; they were permitted as a lesser evil to avoid a greater, never allowed as good; neither had so much as that toleration ever been, if the hard-heartedness and cruelty of that people had not enforced it upon Moses, in a prevention of further mischief; what place can this find with a God in whom there is an infinite tenderness of love and mercy? No time can be any check to his gracious choice; the inconstant minds of us men may alter upon slight dislikes; our God is ever himself; *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever*, Heb. xiii. 8; *with* him *there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning*, James i. 17. Divorces were ever grounded upon hatred, Mal. ii. 16. *No man*, saith the apostle, *ever yet hated his own flesh*, Eph. v. 29; much less shall God do so, who is love itself, 1 John iv. 16. His love and our union is, like himself, everlasting; *Having loved his own*, saith the disciple of love, *which were in the world, he loved them to the end*, John xiii. 1. He that hates putting away (Mal. ii. 16) can never act it; so as, in this relation, we are indissoluble.

Can they have received that *bread which came down from heaven*, and *flesh* which *is meat indeed*, and that *blood* which *is drink indeed*? Can their souls have digested it by a lively faith, and converted themselves into it, and it into themselves; and can they now think it can be severed from their own substance?

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Can they find themselves truly ingraffed in the Tree of life, and grown into one body with that heavenly plant, and as a living branch of that tree bearing pleasant and wholesome fruit acceptable to God (Rev. xxii. 2), and beneficial to men; and can they look upon themselves as some withered bough, fit only for the fire?

Can they lay themselves living stones, surely laid upon the foundation, Jesus Christ, to the making up of an heavenly temple for the eternal inhabitation of God; and can they think they can be shaken out with every storm of temptation?

Have these men ever taken into their serious thoughts that divine prayer and meditation which our blessed Redeemer, now at the point of his death, left for an happy farewell to his Church, in every word whereof there is an heaven of comfort? *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe in me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one with us: and the glory that thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me,* John xvii. 20—23. O heavenly consolation! O indefeasible assurance! What room can there be now here for our diffidence? Can the Son of God pray and not be heard? For himself, he needs not pray; as being eternally one with the Father; *God blessed for ever:* he prays for his; and his prayer is, that they may be one with the Father and him, even as they are one. They cannot, therefore, but be partakers of this blessed union; and being partakers of it, they cannot be dissevered. And to make sure work, that glory which the Father gave to the Son of his love they are already, through his gracious participation, prepossessed of; here they have begun to enter upon that heaven from which none of the powers of hell can possibly eject them. O the unspeakably happy condition of believers! O that all the saints of God in a comfortable sense of their inchoate blessedness could sing for joy; and here, beforehand, begin to take up those hallelujahs, which they shall ere long continue, and never end, in the choir of the highest heaven!

Sect. IX.—*The privileges and benefits of this union: the first of them, life.*

Having now taken a view of this blessed union in the nature and resemblances of it, it will be time to bend thine eyes upon

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those most advantageous consequents, and high privileges, which do necessarily follow upon and attend this heavenly conjunction.

Whereof the first is that which we are wont to account sweetest, life.

Not this natural life, which is maintained by the breath of our nostrils. Alas! what is that but a bubble, a vapour, a shadow, a dream, nothing? as it is the gift of a good God, worthy to be esteemed precious; but as it is considered in its own transitoriness and appendent miseries, and in comparison of a better life, not worthy to take up our hearts.

This life of nature is that which ariseth from the union of the body with the soul, many times enjoyed upon hard terms; the spiritual life which we now speak of, arising from the union betwixt God and the soul, is that wherein there can be nothing but perfect contentment, and *joy unspeakable, and full of glory.*

Yea, this is that life which Christ not only gives, but is. He that gave himself for us, and is that life that he gives us: *When Christ, which is our life, shall appear,* saith the apostle, Col. iii. 4; and, *Christ is to me to live,* Phil. i. 21; and, most emphatically, *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me,* Gal. ii. 20. Lo, it is a common favour, that in him we live; but it is an especial favour to his own, that he lives in us: *Know ye not your own selves,* saith the apostle, *how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?* 2 Cor. xiii. 5. And wheresoever he is, there he lives. We have not a dead Saviour, but a living; and where he lives, he animates. It is not, therefore, St. Paul's case alone, it is every believer's; who may truly say, *I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*

Now how these lives and the authors of them are distinguished is worth thy carefulest consideration.

Know then, my son, that every faithful man's bosom is a Rebekah's womb (Gen. xxv. 22), wherein there are twins: a rough Esau, and the seed of promise; the old man, and the new; the flesh, and the spirit. And these have their lives distinct from each other; the new man lives not the life of the old; neither can the old man live the life of the new; it is not one life that could maintain the opposite strugglings of both these: corrupt nature is it that gives and continues the life of the old man; it is Christ that gives life to the new.

We cannot say but the old man, or flesh, is the man too; for

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I know, saith the Chosen Vessel, *that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing*, Rom. vii. 18; but the spiritual part may yet better challenge the title; for *I delight in the law of God after the inward man*, ver. 22.

That old man of ours is derived from the first Adam; as we sinned in him, so he liveth in us. The second Adam both gives and is the life of our regeneration, like as he is also the life of our glory; the life that follows our second resurrection; *I am*, saith he, *the resurrection and the life.*

What is it, then, whereby the new creature lives? Surely no other than the Spirit of Christ; that alone is it that gives being and life to the renewed soul.

Life is no stranger to us; there is nothing wherewith we are so well acquainted; yea, we feel continually what it is, and what it produceth. It is that from whence all sense, action, motion, floweth; it is that which gives us to be what we are.

All this is Christ to the regenerate man. It is one thing what he is or doth as a man, another thing what he is or doth as a Christian; as a man, he hath eyes, ears, motions, affections, understanding, naturally as his own; as a Christian, he hath all these from him with whom he is spiritually one, the Lord Jesus.

And the objects of all these vary accordingly. His natural eyes behold bodily and material things; his spiritual eyes see things invisible. His outward ears hear the sound of the voice; his inward ears hear the voice of God's Spirit speaking to his soul. His bodily feet move in his own secular ways; his spiritual walk with God in all the ways of his commandments. His natural affections are set upon those things which are agreeable thereunto; he loves beauty, fears pain and loss, rejoices in outward prosperity, hates an enemy; his renewed affections are otherwise and more happily bestowed; now he loves goodness for its own sake, hates nothing but sin, fears only the displeasure of a good God, rejoices in God's favour, which is better than life. His former thoughts were altogether taken up with vanity, and earthed in the world; now he *seeks the things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God*, Col. iii. 1.

Finally, he is such as that a beholder sees nothing but man in him, but God and his soul find Christ in him, both in his renewed person and actions, in all the degrees both of his life and growth,

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of his sufferings and glory: *My little children*, saith St. Paul, *of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you*, Gal. iv. 19.

Lo here Christ both conceived and born in the faithful heart. Formation follows conception, and travail implies a birth. Now the believer is a *newborn babe* in Christ, 1 Cor. iii. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 2; and so, mutually, Christ in him. From thence he grows up to strength of *youth*, 1 John ii. 14; and, at last, to *perfection*, even towards *the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*, Eph. iv. 13; 2 Cor. xiii. 9; Heb. vi. 1. And, in this condition, he is *dead with Christ*, Rom. vi. 8; he is *buried with Christ*, ver. 4; he is *alive again unto God through Christ*, ver. 11; he is *risen with Christ*, Col. iii. 1; and *with Christ* he is *glorified*, Rom. viii. 17; yea, yet more than so, his sufferings are his, Col. i. 24; he is, *in Christ, an heir of glory*, Rom. viii. 17; and *Christ* is, *in* him, *the hope of glory*, Col. i. 27.

SECT. X.—*A complaint of our insensibleness of this mercy, and an excitation to a cheerful recognition of it.*

Dost thou not now find cause, my son, to complain of thyself—as, I confess, I daily do—that thou art so miserably apt to forget these intimate respects between thy Christ and thee? Art thou not ashamed to think how little sense thou hast had of thy great happiness?

Lo, Christ is in thy bosom, and thou feelest him not! It is not thy soul that animates thee in thy renewed estate; it is thy God and Saviour, and thou hast not hitherto perceived it.

It is no otherwise with thee in this case than with the members of thine own body. There is the same life in thy fingers and toes that there is in the head or heart, yea, in the whole man, and yet those limbs know not that they have such a life. Had those members reason as well as sense, they would perceive that wherewith they are enlived; thou hast more than reason, faith; and therefore mayest well know whence thou hast this spiritual life; and thereupon art much wanting to thyself, if thou dost not enjoy so useful and comfortable an apprehension.

Resolve, therefore, with thyself, that no secular occasion shall ever set off thy heart from this blessed object, and that thou wilt as soon forget thy natural life as this spiritual; and raise up thy thoughts from this dust to the heaven of heavens. Shake off this

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natural pusillanimity, and mean conceit of thyself, as if thou wert all earth, and know thyself advanced to a celestial condition; that thou art united to the Son of God, and animated by the Holy Spirit of God: so is *the life which* thou now *livest in the flesh*, thou *livest by the faith of the Son of God, who loved* thee, *and gave himself for* thee, Gal. ii. 20.

See then, and confess, how just cause we have to condemn the deadheartedness wherewith we are subject to be possessed; and how many worthy Christians are there in the world who bear a part with us in this just blame, who have yielded over themselves to a disconsolate heartlessness and a sad dejection of spirit, partly through a natural disposition inclining to dumpishness, and partly through the prevalence of temptation; for Satan, well knowing how much it makes for our happiness cheerfully to reflect upon our interest in Christ and to live in the joyful sense of it, labours by all means to withdraw our hearts from this so comfortable object, and to clog us with a pensive kind of spiritual sullenness, accounting it no small mastery if he can prevail with us so far as to bereave us of this habitual joy in the Holy Ghost, arising from the inanimation of Christ living and breathing within us.

So much the more, therefore, must we bend all the powers of our souls against this dangerous and deadly machination of our spiritual enemy; labour as for life to maintain this fort of our joy against all the powers of darkness; and if at any time we find ourselves beaten off, through the violence of temptation, we must chide ourselves into our renewed valour, and expostulate the matter with our shrinking courage, with the man after God's own heart: *Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God*, Ps. xlii. 11; xliii. 5.

Sect. XI.—*An incitement to joy and thankfulness for Christ our life.*

Neither is here more place for an heavenly joy than for height of spirit and raptures of admiration at that infinite goodness and mercy of our God, who hath vouchsafed so far to grace his elect as to honour them with a special inhabitation of his ever blessed Deity, yea, to live in them, and to make them live mutually in and to himself.

What capacity is there in the narrow heart of man to conceive

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of this incomprehensible favour to his poor creature? O Saviour, this is no small part of that great mystery whereinto *the angels desire to look* (1 Peter i. 12), and can never look to the bottom of it; how shall the weak eyes of sinful flesh ever be able to reach unto it?

When thou, in the estate of thy human infirmity, offeredst to go down to the centurion's house, that humble commander could say, *Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof;* what shall we then say, that thou, in the state of thy heavenly glory, shouldest vouchsafe to come down and dwell with us in these houses of clay, and to make our breasts *the temples of thy Holy Ghost*, 1 Cor. vi. 19.

When thine holy mother came to visit the partner of her joy, thy forerunner, then in the womb of his mother, sprang for the joy of thy presence, though distermined by a second womb, Luke i. 44; how should we be affected with a ravishment of spirit, whom thou hast pleased to visit in so much mercy as to come down into us, and to be spiritually conceived in the womb of our hearts, and thereby to give a new and spiritual life to our poor souls; a life of thine own, yet made ours; a life begun in grace, and ending in eternal glory!

SECT. XII.—*The duties we owe to God for his mercies to us in this life, which we have from Christ.*

Never did the holy God give a privilege where he did not expect a duty. He hath more respect to his glory than to throw away his favours. The life that ariseth from this blessed union of our souls with Christ, as it is the height of all his mercies, so it calls for our most zealous affections and most effectual improvement.

Art thou then thus happily united to Christ, and thus enlived by Christ? how entire must thou needs be with him! how dear must thy valuations be of him! how heartily must thou be devoted to him! *The spirit of man*, saith wise Solomon, *is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly*, Prov. xx. 27; and therefore cannot but be acquainted with his own inmates; and finding so heavenly a guest as the Spirit of Christ in the secret lodgings of his soul applies itself to him in all things; so as these two Spirits agree in all their spiritual concernments: *The Spirit itself*, saith the holy apostle, *beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God*, Rom. viii. 16. And

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not in this case only, but upon whatsoever occasion, the faithful man hath this *Urim* in his breast, and may consult with this inward oracle of his God for direction and resolution in all his doubts; neither can he, according to the counsel of the Psalmist (Ps. iv. 4.), commune with his own heart, but that Christ, who lives there, is ready to give him an answer. Shortly, our souls and we are one, and the soul and life are so near one, that the one is commonly taken for the other: Christ therefore, who is the life and soul of our souls, is, and needs must be, so intrinsical to us, that we cannot so much as conceive of our spiritual being without him.

Thou needest not be told, my son, how much thou valuest life. Besides thine own sense, Satan himself can tell thee, and in this case thou mayest believe him, *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life*, Job ii. 4. What ransom can be set upon it that a man would stick to give? though mountains of gold, Ps. xlix 7; though thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil, Micah vi. 7. Yea, how readily do we expose our dear limbs, not to hazard only, but to loss, for the preservation of it! Now, alas! what is our life? *It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away*, James iv. 14.

And if we do thus value a perishing life, that is going out every moment, what price shall we set upon eternity? If Christ be our life, how precious is that life, which neither inward distempers nor outward violences can bereave us of! which neither can be decayed by time nor altered with cross events! Hear the Chosen Vessel: *What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ*, Phil. iii. 7, 8; and as one that did not esteem his own life dear to him (Acts xx. 24) in respect of that better: *Always*, saith he, *bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body*, 2 Cor. iv. 10. How cheerfully have the noble and conquering armies of holy martyrs given away these momentary lives, that they might hold fast their Jesus, the life of their souls! And who can be otherwise affected that knows and feels the infinite happiness that offers itself to be enjoyed by him in the Lord Jesus?

Lastly, if Christ be thy life, then thou art so devoted to him

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that thou livest, as in him and by him, so to him also, aiming only at his service and glory, and framing thyself wholly to his will and directions. Thou canst not so much as eat or drink but with respect to him, 1 Cor. x. 31. O the gracious resolution of him that was rapt into the third heaven, worthy to be the pattern of all faithful hearts; *According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain*, Phil. i. 20, 21. Our natural life is not worthy to be its own scope: we do not live merely that we may live; our spiritual life, Christ, is the utmost and most perfect end of all our living, without the intuition whereof we would not live, or, if we should, our natural life were no other than a spiritual death.

O Saviour, let me not live longer than I shall be enlived by thee, or than thou shalt be glorified by me.

And what rule should I follow in all the carriage of my life but thine? thy precepts, thine examples; that so I may live thee as well as preach thee, and in both may find thee, as thou hast truly laid forth thyself, *the way, the truth, and the life*, John xiv. 6; *the way* wherein I shall walk, *the truth* which I shall believe and profess, and *the life* which I shall enjoy.

In all my moral actions, therefore, teach me to square myself by thee: whatever I am about to do or speak or effect, let me think, "If my Saviour were now upon earth would he do this that I am now putting my hand unto? would he speak these words that I am now uttering? would he be thus disposed as I now feel myself? Let me not yield myself to any thought, word, or action, which my Saviour would be ashamed to own. Let him be pleased so to manage his own life in me, that all the interest he hath given me in myself may be wholly surrendered to him; that I may be as it were dead in myself while he lives and moves in me.

SECT. XIII.—*The improvement of this life, in that Christ is made our wisdom.*

By virtue of this blessed union, as Christ is become our life, so (that which is the *highest improvement*, not only of the rational, but the supernatural and spiritual life) is he thereby also *made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*, 1 Cor. i. 30: not that he only works these great things

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in and for us; this were too cold a construction of the divine bounty; but that he really becomes all these to us who are true partakers of him.

Even of the wisest men that ever nature could boast of is verified that character which the divine apostle gave of them long ago; *Their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools*, Rom. i. 21, 22: and still the best of us, if we be but ourselves, may take up that complaint of Asaph; *So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee*, Ps. lxxiii. 22: and of Agur, the son of Jakeh; *Surely I am more brutish than man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy*, Prov. xxx. 2, 3. And if any man will be challenging more to himself, he must at last take up with Solomon; *I said, I will be wise; but it was far from me*, Eccl. vii. 23.

But how defective soever we are in ourselves, there is wisdom enough in our Head, Christ, to supply all our wants. He that is the Wisdom of the Father is by the Father made our Wisdom: *In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, saith the apostle, Col. ii. 3; so hid that they are both revealed and communicated to his own; *For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*, 2 Cor. iv. 6. In and by him hath it pleased the Father to impart himself unto us; *He is the image of the invisible God*, Col. i. 15; even the *brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person*, Heb. i. 3. It was a just check that he gave to Philip in the gospel; *Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father*, John xiv. 9.

And this point of wisdom is so high and excellent, that all human skill, and all the so much admired depths of philosophy, are but mere ignorance and foolishness in comparison of it. Alas, what can these profound wits reach unto but the very outside of these visible and transitory things? As for the inward forms of the meanest creatures, they are so altogether hid from them as if they had no being; and as for spiritual and divine things, the most knowing naturalists are either stone blind, that they cannot see them, or grope after them in an Egyptian darkness; *For the natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned,*

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1 Cor. ii. 14. How much less can they know the God of spirits, who, besides his invisibility, is infinite and incomprehensible! Only He, who is made our wisdom, enlighteneth our eyes with this divine knowledge: *No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him*, Matt. xi. 27.

Neither is Christ made our wisdom only in respect of heavenly wisdom imparted to us, but in respect of his perfect wisdom imputed unto us. Alas! our ignorances and sinful misprisions are many and great: where should we appear if our faith did not fetch succour from our all-wise and all-sufficient Mediator? O Saviour, we are wise in thee our Head, how weak soever we are of ourselves. Thine infinite wisdom and goodness both covers and makes up all our defects. The wife cannot be poor while the husband is rich: thou hast vouchsafed to give us a right to thy store; we have no reason to be disheartened with our own spiritual wants, while thou art made our wisdom.

SECT. XIV.—*Christ made our righteousness.*

It is not mere wisdom that can make us acceptable to God. If the serpents were not in their kind wiser than we, we should not have been advised to be wise as serpents. That God who is essential justice, as well as wisdom, requires all his to be not more wise than exquisitely righteous.

Such in themselves they cannot be; *For in many things we sin all.* Such therefore they are and must be in Christ their Head, who is made unto us of God, together with wisdom, righteousness.

O incomprehensible mercy! *He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21.

What a marvellous and happy exchange is here! We are nothing but sin; Christ is perfect righteousness. He is made our sin, that we might be made his righteousness. He that knew no sin is made sin for us, that we, who are all sin, might be made God's righteousness in him. In ourselves we are not only sinful, but sin; in him we are not righteous only, but righteousness itself. Of ourselves we are not righteous, we are made so. In ourselves we are not righteous, but in him: we made not ourselves so, but the same God, in his infinite mercy, who made him sin for us, hath made us his righteousness. No otherwise are we made his righteousness than he is made our sin: our

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sin is made his by God's imputation; so is his righteousness made ours.

How fully doth the second Adam answer and transcend the first! *By the offence of* the first *judgment came upon all men to condemnation; by the righteousness of* the second *the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life,* Rom. v. 18. *As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous,* ver. 19; righteous, not in themselves; *so death passed upon all, for that all have sinned,* ver. 12; but in him that made them so, *by whom we have received the atonement,* ver. 11.

How free, then, and how perfect is our justification! What quarrel may the pure and holy God have against righteousness? against his own righteousness? and such are we made in and by him.

What can now stand between us and blessedness?

Not our sins; for this is the praise of his mercy, that he *justifies the ungodly,* Rom. iv. 5. Yea, were we not sinful, how were we capable of his justification? sinful, as in the term from whence this act of his mercy moveth; not, as in the term wherein it resteth. His grace finds us sinful: it doth not leave us so. Far be it from the righteous Judge of the world to absolve a wicked soul continuing such; *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord,* Prov. xvii. 15. No; but he kills sin in us, while he remits it; and at once cleanseth and accepts our persons. Repentance and remission do not lag one after another: both of them meet at once in the penitent soul: at once doth the hand of our faith lay hold on Christ, and the hand of Christ lay hold on the soul to justification; so as the sins that are done away can be no bar to our happiness.

And what but sins can pretend to an hindorance? All our other weaknesses are no eyesore to God; no rub in our way to heaven.

What matters it, then, how unworthy we are of ourselves? It is Christ's obedience that is our righteousness, and that obedience cannot but be exquisitely perfect; cannot but be both justly accepted as his, and mercifully accepted as for us.

There is a great deal of difference betwixt being righteous and being made righteousness. Every regenerate soul hath an inherent justice or righteousness in itself; *He that is righteous,*

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let him be righteous still, saith the angel, Rev. xxii. 11. But at the best, this righteousness of ours is, like ourselves, full of imperfection; *If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?* Psalm cxxx. 3. *Behold, we are before thee in our trespasses: for we cannot stand before thee because of this*, Ezra ix. 15. *How should a man be just with God? if he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand*, Job ix. 2, 3. So, then, *he that doeth righteousness is righteous*, 1 John iii. 7, but by pardon and indulgence, because the righteousness he doth is weak and imperfect. He that is made righteousness is perfectly righteous by a gracious acceptation, by a free imputation of absolute obedience.

Woe were us if we were put over to our own accomplishments! for *cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them*, Gal. iii. 10; Deut. xxvii. 26; and *if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*, 1 John i. 8. Lo, if there be truth in us, we must confess we have sin in us; and if we have sin, we violate the law; and if we violate the law, we lie open to a curse.

But here is our comfort, that our surety hath paid our debt. It is true we lay forfeited to death. Justice had said, *The soul that sinneth, it shall die*, Ezek. xviii. 4. Mercy interposeth and satisfies. The Son of God, whose every drop of blood was worth a world, pays this debt for us; and now, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us*, Rom. viii. 33, 34. Our sin, our death, is laid upon him, and undertaken by him; *He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisements of our peace were upon him; and with his stripes we are healed*, Isa. liii. 5. His death, his obedience, is made over to us. So, then, the sin that we have committed, and the death that we have deserved, is not ours; but the death which he hath endured, and the obedience that he hath performed, is so ours as he is ours; who is, thereupon, made of God our righteousness.

Where now are those enemies of grace that scoff at imputation, making it a ridiculous paradox, that a man should become just by another man's righteousness? How dare they stand out

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against the word of truth, which tells us expressly, that Christ is made our righteousness? What strangers are they to that grace they oppugn! How little do they consider that Christ is ours! His righteousness, therefore, by which we are justified, is in him our own. He that hath *borne the iniquity of us all* (Isa. liii. 6.) hath taught us to call our sins our *debts*, Matt. vi. 12; those debts can be but once paid; if the bounty of our Redeemer hath staked down the sums required, and cancelled the bonds, and this payment is, through mercy, fully accepted as from our own hands, what danger, what scruple can remain?

What do we, then, weak souls, tremble to think of appearing before the dreadful tribunal of the Almighty? We know him indeed to be infinitely and inflexibly just; we know his most pure eyes cannot abide to behold sin; we know we have nothing else but sin for him to behold in us. Certainly were we to appear before him in the mere shape of our own sinful selves, we had reason to shake and shiver at the apprehension of that terrible appearance; but now that our faith assures us we shall no otherwise be presented to that awful Judge than as clothed with the robes of Christ's righteousness, how confident should we be, thus decked with the garments of our elder brother, to carry away a blessing! While, therefore, we are dejected with the conscience of our own vileness, we have reason to lift up our heads in the confidence of that perfect righteousness which Christ is made unto us, and we are made in him.

Sect. XV.—*Christ made our sanctification.*

At the bar of men many an one is pronounced just who remains inwardly foul and guilty; for the best of men can but judge of things as they appear, not as they are. But the righteous Arbiter of the world declares none just, whom he makes not holy.

The same mercy, therefore, that makes Christ our righteousness makes him also our sanctification. Of ourselves, wretched men, what are we other, at our best, than unholy creatures, full of pollution and spiritual uncleanness? It is his most Holy Spirit that must *cleanse us from all the filthiness of our flesh and spirit*, 2 Cor. vii. 1, and work us daily to further degrees of sanctification; *He that is holy, let him be holy still*, Rev. xxii. 11. Neither can there be any thing more abhorring from his infinite justice

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and holiness than to justify those souls which lie still in the loathsome ordure of their corruptions.

Certainly they never truly learnt Christ who would draw over Christ's righteousness as a case of their close wickednesses, that sever holiness from justice, and give no place to sanctification in the evidence of their justifying. Never man was justified without faith, and wheresoever faith is, there it *purifieth* and cleanseth, Acts xv. 9.

But besides that the Spirit of Christ works thus powerfully, though gradually, within us, *that he may sanctify and cleanse us with the washing of water by the word,* his holiness is mercifully imputed to us, *that he may present us to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that we should be holy and without blemish,* Eph. v. 26, 27; so as that inchoate holiness, which by his gracious inoperation grows up daily in us towards a full perfection, is abundantly supplied by his absolute holiness, made no less by imputation ours than it is personally his.

When therefore we look into our bosoms, we find just cause to be ashamed of our impurity, and to loath those dregs of corruption that yet remain in our sinful nature; but when we cast up our eyes to heaven, and behold the infinite holiness of that Christ to whom we are united, which by faith is made ours, we have reason to bear up against all the discouragements that may arise from the conscience of our own vileness, and to look God in the face with an awful boldness, as those whom he is pleased to present *holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight,* Col. i. 22, as knowing, that *he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one,* Heb. ii. 11.

SECT. XVI.—*Christ our redemption.*

Redemption was the great errand for which the Son of God came down into the world, and the work which he did while he was in the world, and that which, in way of application of it, he shall be ever accomplishing, till he shall deliver up his mediatory kingdom into the hands of his Father. In this he begins, in this he finishes the great business of our salvation; for those who in this life are enlightened by his wisdom, justified by his merits, sanctified by his grace, are yet conflicting with manifold temptations, and struggling with varieties of miseries and dangers, till

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upon their happy death and glorious resurrection, they shall be fully freed by their ever blessed and victorious Redeemer.

He therefore who, by virtue of that heavenly union, is made unto us of God wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, is also, upon the same ground, made unto us our full redemption.

Redemption implies a captivity. We are naturally under the woful bondage of the law, of sin, of miseries, of death.

The law is a cruel exactor; for it requires of us what we cannot now do, and whips us for not doing it; *For the law worketh wrath,* Rom. iv. 15, and *as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse,* Gal. iii. 10. Sin is a worse tyrant than he, and takes advantage to exercise his cruelty by the law: *For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death,* Rom. vii. 5. Upon sin necessarily follows misery, the forerunner of death, and death, the upshot of all miseries; *By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned,* Rom. v. 12.

From all these is Christ our redemption. From the law: for *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us,* Gal. iii. 13. From sin: for *we are dead to sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord,* Rom. vi. 11: *sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace,* ver. 14. From death, and therein from all miseries: *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ,* 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56, 57.

Now, then, let the law do his worst; *we are not under the law, but under grace,* Rom. vi. 14. The case, therefore, is altered betwixt the law and us. It is not now a cruel taskmaster, to beat us to and for our work; it is our schoolmaster, to direct and to whip us unto Christ. It is not a severe judge, to condemn us; it is a friendly guide, to set us the way towards heaven.

Let Sin join his forces together with the Law, they cannot prevail to our hurt: *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;* Rom. viii. 3, 4.

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Let Death join his forces with them both; we are yet safe; *For the law of the Spirit of life hath freed us from the law of sin and of death*, Rom. viii. 2.

What can we therefore fear, what can we suffer, while Christ is made our redemption?

Finally, as thus Christ *is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption;* so whatsoever else he either is or hath or doth, by virtue of this blessed union, becomes ours. He is our *riches*, Eph. i. 7; our *strength*, Ps. xxvii. 1, xxviii. 7; our *glory*, Eph. i. 18; our *salvation*, 1 Thess. v. 9, Is. xii. 2; our *all*, Coloss. iii. 11. He is all to us, and all is ours in him.

SECT. XVII.—*The external privileges of this union, a right to the blessings of earth and heaven.*

From these primary and intrinsical privileges, therefore, flow all those secondary and external, wherewith we are blessed: and therein a right to all the blessings of God, both of the right hand and of the left; and interest in all the good things both of earth and heaven.

Hereupon it is that the glorious angels of heaven become our guardians, keeping us in all our ways, and working secretly for our good upon all occasions; that all God's creatures are at our service; that we have a true spiritual title to them: *All things are yours*, saith the apostle, *and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's*, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.

But take heed, my son, of mislaying thy claim to what, and in what manner, thou oughtest not. There is a civil right that must regulate our propriety [property] to these earthly things: our spiritual right neither gives us possession of them, nor takes away the right and propriety of others. Every man hath and must have what, by the just laws of purchase, gift, or inheritance, is derived to him; otherwise there would follow an infinite confusion in the world; we could neither enjoy nor give our own, and only Will and Might must be the arbiters of all men's estates: which how unequal it would be, both reason and experience can sufficiently evince.

This right is not for the direption or usurpation of that which civil titles have legally put over to others: there were no theft, no robbery, no oppression in the world, if any man's goods might be every man's: but for the warrantable and comfortable enjoying of those earthly commodities in regard of God their original owner,

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which are by human conveyances justly become ours: *The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness of it;* in his right whatever parcels do lawfully descend unto us, we may justly possess, as we have them legally made over to us, from the secondary and immediate owners.

There is a generation of men who have vainly fancied the founding of temporal dominion in grace; and have, upon this mistaking, outed the true heirs as intruders, and scoffed the just and godly in the possession of wicked inheritors; which, whether they be worse commonwealth's men or Christians, is to me utterly uncertain. Sure I am they are enemies to both: while on the one side they destroy all civil propriety and commerce, and on the other reach the extent of the power of Christianity so far as to render it injurious and destructive, both to reason and to the laws of all well-ordered humanity.

Nothing is ours by injury and injustice; all things are so ours, that we may, with a good conscience, enjoy them as from the hand of a munificent God, when they are rightfully estated upon us by the lawful convention or bequest of men.

In this regard it is that a Christian man is the lord of the whole universe, and hath a right to the whole creation of God. How can he challenge less? he is a son, and in that an heir; and, according to the high expression of the Holy Ghost, *a co-heir with Christ.*

As therefore we may not be *high minded, but fear;* so we may not be too low-hearted in the undervaluing of our condition: in God we are great, how mean soever in ourselves. In his right the world is ours, whatever pittance we enjoy in our own. How can we go less, when we are one with Him who is the possessor of heaven and earth?

It were but a poor comfort to us, if by virtue of this union we could only lay claim to all earthly things: alas! how vain and transitory are the best of these, perishing under our hand in the very use of them! and, in the mean while, how unsatisfying in the fruition! All this were nothing, if we had not hereby an interest in the best of all God's favours, in the heaven of heavens, and the eternity of that glory which is there laid up for his saints, far above the reach of all human expressions or conceits. It was the word of him who is the eternal word of his Father; *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me,*

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John xvii. 24: and not only to be mere spectators, but even partners of all this celestial bliss, together with himself; *The glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one,* John xvii. 22. O the transcendent and incomprehensible blessedness of believers, which even when they enjoy they cannot be able to utter; for measure infinite, for duration eternal! O the inexplicable joy of the full and everlasting accomplishment of the happy union of Christ and the believing soul, more fit for thankful wonder and ravishment of spirit, than for any finite apprehension!

SECT. XVIII.—*The means by which this union is wrought.*

Now, that we may look a little further into the means by which this union is wrought, know, my son, that as there are two persons betwixt whom this union is made, Christ and the believer; so each of them concurs to the happy effecting of it: Christ, by his Spirit diffused through the hearts of all the regenerate, giving life and activity to them; the believer, laying hold by faith upon Christ, so working in him: and these do so re-act upon each other, that from their mutual operation results this gracious union whereof we treat.

Here is a spiritual marriage betwixt Christ and the soul. The liking of one part doth not make up the match, but the consent of both. To this purpose Christ gives his Spirit; the soul plights her faith: what interest have we in Christ but by his Spirit? what interest hath Christ in us but by our faith?

On the one part; *He hath given us his holy Spirit,* saith the apostle, 1 Thess. iv. 8; and in a way of correlation, *We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God,* 1 Cor. ii. 12. And this Spirit we have so received, as that *he dwells in us,* Rom. viii. 11; and so dwells in us, as that we are *joined to the Lord;* and *he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit,* 1 Cor. vi. 17.

On the other part; *We have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God,* Rom. v. 2. So as now, *the life that we live in the flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God,* Gal. ii. 20; who *dwells in our hearts by faith,* Eph. iii. 17. O the grace of faith! according to St. Peter's style (2 Pet. i. 1.), truly *precious:* justly recommended to us by St. Paul (Eph. vi. 16.) above all other graces incident into the soul; as that which, if not alone, yet chiefly transacts all the

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main affairs tending to salvation. For faith is the quickening grace, Gal. ii. 20; Rom. i. 17: the directing grace, 2 Cor. v. 7: the protecting grace, Eph. vi. 16: the establishing grace, Rom. xi. 20; 2 Cor. i. 24: the justifying grace, Rom. v. 1: the sanctifying and purifying grace, Acts xv. 9. Faith is the grace that assents to, apprehends, applies, appropriates Christ, Heb. xi. 1: and hereupon the uniting grace; and, which comprehends all, the saving grace.

If ever therefore we look for any consolation in Christ, or to have any part in this beatifical union, it must be the main care of our hearts to make sure of a lively faith in the Lord Jesus; to lay fast hold upon him; to clasp him close to us; yea, to receive him inwardly into our bosoms: and so to make him ours and ourselves his, that we may be joined to him as our Head; espoused to him as our Husband; incorporated into him as our nourishment; engraffed in him as our stock; and laid upon him as a sure foundation.

Sect. XIX.—*The union of Christ's members with themselves: first, those in heaven.*

Hitherto we have treated of this blessed union as in relation to Christ the Head. It remains that we now consider of it as it stands in relation to the members of his mystical body one towards another.

For as the body is united to the head, so must the members be united to themselves, to make the body truly complete. Thus the Holy Ghost, by his apostle: *As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so is Christ,* 1 Cor. xii. 12.

From this entire conjunction of the members with each other arises that happy communion of saints, which we profess both to believe and to partake of.

This mystical body of Christ is a large one, extending itself both to heaven and earth. There is a real union betwixt all those far-spread limbs; between the saints in heaven, between the saints on earth, between the saints in heaven and earth.

We have reason to begin at heaven. Thence is the original of our union and blessedness.

There was never place for discord in that region of glory since the rebellious angels were cast out thence: *the spirits of just*

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men made perfect (Heb. xii. 23.) must needs agree in a perfect unity.

Neither can it be otherwise: for there is but one will in heaven; one scope of the desires of blessed souls, which is the glory of their God: all the whole choir sing one song, and in that one harmonious tune of hallelujah. We poor parcel-sainted souls here on earth, profess to bend our eyes directly upon the same holy end, the honour of our Maker and Redeemer; but alas, at our best we are drawn to look asquint at our own aims of profit or pleasure: we profess to sing loud praises unto God, but it is with many harsh and jarring notes. Above there is a perfect accordance, in an unanimous glorifying of him that sits upon the throne for ever: *O how ye love the Lord, all ye his saints,* Psalm xxxi. 23. *O how joyful ye are in glory,* Psalm cxlix. 5. *The heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints,* Ps. lxxxix. 5.

O what a blessed commonwealth is that above! *The city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem,* (ever *at unity with itself,* Ps. cxxii. 3), and, therein, *an innumerable company of angels, and the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, the spirits of just men made perfect, and,* whom they all adore, *God the Judge of all, and Jesus the mediator of the new testament,* Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24. All these as one, as holy. Those *twenty thousand chariots* of heaven (Ps. lxviii. 17.) move all one way. When those four beasts, *full of eyes, round about the throne, give glory, and honour, and thanks to him that sits upon the throne, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come; then the four and twenty elders fall down before him, and cast their crowns before the throne,* Rev. iv. 6–10. No one wears his crown while the rest cast down theirs; all accord in one act of giving glory to the Highest. After the sealing of the tribes, *a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour,*

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and power, and might, be unto God for ever and ever, Rev. vii. 9–12.

Lo, those spirits which here below were habited with several bodies, different in shapes, statures, ages, complexions, are now above as one spirit, rather distinguished than divided; all united in one perpetual adoration and fruition of the God of spirits; and mutually happy in God, in themselves, in each other.

Sect. XX.—*The union of Christ's members upon earth: first, in matter of judgment.*

Our copy is set us above; we labour to take it out here on earth. What do we but daily pray that the blessed union of souls, which is eminent in that empyreal heaven, may be exemplified by us in this region of mortality? *For having through Christ an access by one Spirit unto God the Father,* being *no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God,* Eph. ii. 18, 19, we cease not to pray, *Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven,* Matt. vi. 10. Yea, O Saviour, thou who canst not but be heard hast prayed to thy Father for the accomplishment of this union; *That they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfect in one,* John xvii. 22, 23.

What then is this union of the members of Christ here on earth, but a spiritual oneness arising from a happy conspiration of their thoughts and affections? For whereas there are two main principles of all human actions and dispositions, the brain and the heart, the conjuncture of these two cannot but produce a perfect union: from the one, our thoughts take their rise; our affections, from the other; in both, the soul puts itself forth upon all matter of accord or difference.

The union of *thoughts* is, when we mind the same things, when we agree in the same truths. This is the charge which the apostle of the Gentiles lays upon his Corinthians; and, in their persons, upon all Christians: *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment;* 1 Cor. i. 10.

And this is no other than that *one faith,* Eph. iv. 5, which makes up the one Church of Christ upon earth. One, both in respect of times and places.

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Of times: so as the fathers of the first world, the patriarchs of the next, and all God's people in their ages, that looked together with them for the redemption of Israel, are united with us Christians of the last days in the same belief, and make up one entire body of Christ's catholic Church.

Of places: so as all those that truly profess the name of Christ, though scattered into the farthest remote regions of the earth, even those that walk with their feet opposite to ours, yet meet with us in the same centre of Christian faith, and make up one household of God.

Not that we can hope it possible that all Christians should agree in all truths. While we are here, our minds cannot but be more unlike to each other than our faces; yea, it is a rare thing for a man to hold constant to his own apprehensions.

Lord God! what a world do we meet with of those who miscal themselves several religions; indeed, several professions of one and the same Christianity! Melchites, Georgians, Maronites, Jacobites, Armenians, Abyssines, Cophti, Nestorians, Russians, Mingrelians, and the rest, that fill up the large map of Christianography: all which, as while they hold the head Christ, they cannot be denied the privilege of his members; so being such, they are or should be indissolubly joined together in the unity of spirit, and maintenance of *the faith which was once delivered unto the saints*, Jude 3. It is not the variety of by-opinions that can exclude them from having their part in that one catholic Church, and their just claim to the communion of saints. While they hold the solid and precious foundation, it is not the *hay* or *stubble* (1 Cor. iii. 12.) which they lay upon it that can set them off from God or his Church. But in the mean time it must be granted, that they have much to answer for to the God of peace and unity, who are so much addicted to their own conceits, and so indulgent to their own interest, as to raise and maintain new doctrines, and to set up new sects in the Church of Christ, varying from the common and received truths; labouring to draw disciples after them, to the great distraction of souls and scandal of Christianity. With which sort of disturbers I must needs say this age, into which we are fallen, hath been and is, above all that have gone before us, most miserably pestered. What good soul can be other than confounded to hear of and see more than a hundred and fourscore new, and some of them dangerous and blasphemous opinions, broached and defended in one, once famous and unanimous, Church

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of Christ? Who can say other, upon the view of these wild thoughts, than Gerson said long since, that the world, now grown old, is full of doting fancies; if not rather that the world, now near his end, raves and talks nothing but fancies and frenzies? How arbitrary soever these self-willed fanatics may think it, to take to themselves this liberty of thinking what they list, and venting what they think, the blessed apostle hath long since branded them with an heavy sentence: *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple,* Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

But notwithstanding all this hideous variety of vain and heterodoxal conceptions, he who is the Truth of God, and the Bridegroom of his spouse the Church, hath said, *My dove, my undefiled is one,* Cant. vi. 9: one, in the main, essential, fundamental verities necessary to salvation, though differing in divers misraised corollaries, inconsequent inferences, unnecessary additions, feigned traditions, unwarrantable practices. The body is one, though the garments differ; yea, rather, for most of these, the garment is one, but differs in the dressing; handsomely and comely set out by one, disguised by another. Neither is it, nor ever shall be, in the power of all the fiends of hell, the professed makebates of the world, to make God's Church other than one; which were indeed utterly to extinguish and reduce it to nothing: for the unity and entity of the Church can no more be divided than itself. It were no less than blasphemy to fasten upon the chaste and most holy Husband of the Church any other than one spouse. In the institution of marriage, *did he not make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed,* Mal. ii. 15. That which he ordained for us, shall not the holy God much more observe in his own heavenly match with his Church? Here is then *one Lord, one faith, one baptism:* one baptism by which we enter into the Church; one faith which we profess in the Church; and one Lord whom we serve, and who is the Head and Husband of the Church.

SECT. XXI.—*The union of Christians in matter of affection.*

How much, therefore, doth it concern us, that we, who are united in one common belief, should be much more united in affection!

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that where there is *one way* there should be much more *one heart!* Jer. xxxii. 39. This is so justly supposed, that the prophet questions, *Can two walk together, except they be agreed?* Amos iii. 3. If we walk together in our judgments, we cannot but accord in our wills.

This was the praise of the primitive Christians, and the pattern of their successors: *The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul,* Acts iv. 32.

Yea, this is the livery which our Lord and Saviour made choice of, whereby his menial servants should be known and distinguished: *By this shall all men know that ye be my disciples, if ye have love to one another,* John xiii. 35. In vain shall any man pretend to a discipleship, if he do not make it good by his love to all the family of Christ.

The whole Church is the spiritual temple of God. Every believer is a living stone, laid in those sacred walls: what is our Christian love but the mortar or cement whereby these stones are fast joined together to make up this heavenly building? without which that precious fabric could not hold long together, but would be subject to disjointing by those violent tempests of opposition wherewith it is commonly beaten upon. There is no place for any loose stone in God's edifice: the whole Church is one entire body: all the limbs must be held together by the ligaments of Christian love; if any one will be severed, and affect to subsist of itself, it hath lost its place in the body. Thus the apostle: that we, *being sincere in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love,* Eph. iv. 15, 16.

But in case there happen to be differences in opinion concerning points not essential, not necessary to salvation, this diversity may not breed an alienation of affection. That charity, which can cover a multitude of sins, may much more cover many small dissensions of judgment. We cannot hope to be all and at all times equally enlightened. At how many and great weaknesses of judgment did it please our merciful Saviour to connive in his domestic disciples! They that had so long sat at the sacred feet of him that spake as never man spake, were yet to seek of those scriptures which had so clearly foretold his resurrection, John

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xx. 9; and after that were at a fault for the manner of his kingdom, Acts i. 6: yet he that breaks not the bruised reed, nor quenches the smoking flax, falls not harshly upon them for so foul an error and ignorance, but entertains them with all loving respect, not as followers only, but as friends, John xv. 15. And his great apostle, after he had spent himself in his unweariable endeavours upon God's Church, and had sown the seeds of wholesome and saving doctrine every where, what rank and noisome weeds of erroneous opinions rose up under his hand in the churches of Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Colosse, Philippi, and Thessalonica! these he labours to root out with much zeal, with no bitterness; so opposing the errors, as not alienating his affection from the churches. These, these must be our precedents; pursuing that charge of the prime apostle: *Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous,* 1 Pet. iii. 8; and that passionate and adjuring obtestation of the apostle of the Gentiles: *If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind,* Phil. ii. 1, 2.

This is it that gives beauty, strength, glory to the Church of God upon earth, and brings it nearest to the resemblance of that triumphant part above, where there is all perfection of love and concord. In imitation whereof the Psalmist, sweetly: *Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is, brethren, to dwell together in unity!* Ps. cxxxiii. 1.

Sect. XXII.—*A complaint of divisions, and notwithstanding them an assertion of unity.*

So much the more justly lamentable it is to see the manifold and grievous distractions of the Church of Christ, both in judgment and affection.

Woe is me, into how many thousand pieces is the seamless coat of our Saviour rent! Yea, into what numberless atoms is the precious body of Christ torn and minced! There are more religions than nations upon earth, and in each religion as many different conceits as men. If St. Paul, when his Corinthians did but say, *I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I am of Cephas,* could ask, *Is Christ divided?* (1 Cor. i. 12, 13,) when there was only an

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emulatory magnifying of their own teachers, though agreeing and orthodox; what, think we, would he now say, if he saw an hundred of sect-masters and heresiarchs, some of them opposite to other, all to the truth, applauded by their credulous and divided followers? all of them claiming Christ for theirs, and denying him to their gainsayers. Would he not ask, "Is Christ multiplied? Is Christ subdivided? Is Christ shred into infinites?" O God! what is become of Christianity! How do evil spirits and men labour to destroy that creed which we have always constantly professed! For if we set up more Christs, where is that one? and if we give way to these infinite distractions, where is the communion of saints?

But be not too much dismayed, my son. Notwithstanding all these cold disheartenings, take courage to thyself. He that is truth itself hath said, *The gates of hell shall not prevail against* his Church, Matt. xvi. 18. In spite of all devils there shall be saints; and those are and shall be as the scales of the leviathan, whose *strong pieces of shields are his pride, shut up together, as with a close seal. One is so near to another, that no air can come betwixt them. They are joined one to another, they stick together, that they cannot be sundered,* Job xli. 15, 16, 17. In all the main principles of religion, there is an universal and unanimous consent of all Christians: and these are they that constitute a Church. Those that agree in these, Christ is pleased to admit, for matter of doctrine, as members of that body whereof he is the Head; and if they admit not of each other as such, the fault is in the uncharitableness of the refusers no less than in the error of the refused. And if any vain and loose stragglers will needs sever themselves, and wilfully choose to go ways of their own, let them know, that the union of Christ's Church shall consist entire without them; this great ocean will be one collection of waters when these drops are lost in the dust. In the mean time, it highly concerns all that wish well to the sacred name of Christ, to labour *to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,* Eph. iv. 3, and to renew and continue the prayer of the apostle for all the professors of Christianity: *Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one towards another according to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,* Rom. xv. 5, 6.

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SECT. XXIII.—*The necessary effects and fruits of this union of Christian hearts.*

Far be it from us to think this union of the hearts of God's saints upon earth can be idle and ineffectual; but wherever it is, it puts forth itself in a like-affectedness of disposition, into an improvement of gifts, into a communication of outward blessings, to the benefit of that happy consociation.

We cannot be single in our affections, if we be limbs of a Christian community. What member of the body can complain so as the rest shall not feel it? even the head and heart are in pain when a joint of the least toe suffers. No Christian can be afflicted alone. It is not St. Paul's case only; *Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?* 2 Cor. xi. 29. Our shoulders are not our own: we must *bear one another's burdens,* Gal. vi. 2. There is a better kind of spiritual good-fellowship in all the saints of God; they hate a propriety [exclusive property] of passions: *Rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep,* Rom. xii. 15.

Their affections are not more communicative than their gifts and graces. Those, as they are bestowed with an intuition of the common good, so they are improvided. Wherefore hath this man quickness of wit, that man depth of judgment; this, heat of zeal; that, power of elocution; this, skill; that, experience; this, authority; that, strength; but that all should to be laid together for the raising of the common stock? How rich therefore is every Christian soul, that is not only furnished with its own graces, but hath a special interest in all the excellent gifts of all the most eminent servants of God through the whole world! Surely he cannot be poor while there is any spiritual wealth in the Church of God upon earth.

Neither are or can these gifts be in the danger of concealment; they are still put forth for the public advantage. As therefore no true Christian is his own man, so he freely lays out himself by example, by admonition, by exhortation, by consolation, by prayer, for the universal benefit of all his fellow-members.

By example; which is not a little winning and prevalent: *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven,* saith our Saviour, in his sermon upon the mount, Matt. v. 16: and his great

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apostle seconds his charge to his Philippians; *That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life,* Phil. ii. 15, 16. Lo, the world sits in darkness, and either stirs not, or moves with danger: good example is a light to their feet, which directs them to walk in the ways of God without erring, without stumbling; so as the good man's actions are so many copies for novices to take out, no less instructive than the wisest men's precepts.

By admonition: the sinner is in danger of drowning; seasonable admonition is an hand reached out, that lays hold on him now sinking, and draws him up to the shore. The sinner is already in the fire; seasonable admonition snatches him out from the everlasting burnings, Jude 23. The charitable Christian may not forbear this (ofttimes thankless, but) always necessary and profitable duty: *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him,* Lev. xix. 17.

By exhortation: the fire of God's Spirit within us is subject to many damps and dangers of quenching: seasonable exhortation blows it up, and quickens those sparks of good motions to a perfect flame. Even the best of us lies open to a certain deadness and obduredness of heart: seasonable exhortation shakes off this peril; and keeps the heart in an holy tenderness, and whether awful or cheerful disposition: *Exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,* Heb. iii. 13.

By consolation: we are all naturally subject to droop under the pressure of afflictions; seasonable comforts lift and stay us up. It is a sad complaint that the Church makes in the Lamentations; *They have heard that I sigh: there is none to comfort me,* Lam. i. 21: and David sets the same mournful ditty upon his Shoshannim; *Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, and there was none; and for comforters, but I found none,* Ps. lxix. 20. Wherefore hath God given to men *the tongue of the learned,* but that they *might know to speak a word in season to him that is weary?* Is. l. 4; that they may *strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees,* and *say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be*

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strong, fear not? Is. xxxv. 3, 4. The charge that our Saviour gives to Peter holds universally: *Thou, when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren*, Luke xxii. 32.

By prayer; so as each member of Christ's Church sues for all, neither can any one be shut out from partaking the benefit of the devotions of all God's saints upon earth. There is a certain spiritual traffick of piety betwixt all God's children, wherein they exchange prayers with each other, not regarding number so much as weight. Am I weak in spirit, and faint in my supplications? I have no less share in the most fervent prayers of the holiest suppliants than in my own; all the vigour that is in the most ardent hearts supplies my defects; while there is life in their faithful devotions, I cannot go away unblessed.

Lastly, where there is a communion of inward graces and spiritual services, there must needs be much more a communication of outward and temporal good things, as just occasion requireth. Away with those dotages of Platonical or anabaptistical communities. Let proprieties be, as they ought, constantly fixed where the laws and civil right have placed them; but let the use of these outward blessings be managed and commanded by the necessities of our brethren: *Withhold not thy goods from the owners thereof, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it. Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again to-morrow, and I will give it; when thou hast it by thee*, Prov. iii. 27, 28. These temporal things were given us, not to engross and hoard up superfluously, but to distribute and dispense: *As we therefore have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially them who are of the household of faith*, Gal. vi. 10.

Such then is the union of God's children here on earth, both in matter of judgment and affection; and the beneficial improvement of that affection, whether in spiritual gifts, or good offices, or communicating of our earthly substance. Where the heart is one none of these can be wanting, and where they all are there is an happy communion of saints.

Sect. XXIV.—*The union of the saints on earth with those in heaven.*

As there is a perfect union betwixt the glorious saints in heaven, and an union, though imperfect, betwixt the saints on earth; so there is an union, partly perfect and partly imperfect, between the saints in heaven and the saints below upon earth: perfect in

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respect of those glorified saints above; imperfect in respect of the weak returns we are able to make to them again.

Let no man think that because those blessed souls are out of sight far distant in another world, and we are here toiling in a vale of tears, we have therefore lost all mutual regard to each other; no, there is still and ever will be a secret but unfailing correspondence between heaven and earth. The present happiness of those heavenly citizens cannot have abated aught of their knowledge and charity, but must needs have raised them to a higher pitch of both. They therefore, who are now glorious comprehensors, cannot but in a generality retain the notice of the sad condition of us poor travellers here below, panting towards our rest together with them, and, in common, wish for the happy consummation of this our weary pilgrimage in the fruition of their glory. That they have any perspective whereby they can see down into our particular wants is that which we find no ground to believe; it is enough that they have an universal apprehension of the estate of Christ's warfaring Church upon the face of the earth, Rev. vi. 10; and fellow-members of the same mystical body long for a perfect glorification of the whole.

As for us wretched pilgrims, that are yet left here below to tug with many difficulties, we cannot forget that better half of us that is now triumphant in glory. O ye blessed saints above, we honour your memories so far as we ought; we do with praise recount your virtues; we magnify your victories; we bless God for your happy exemption from the misery of this world, and for your estating in that blessed immortality; we imitate your holy examples; we long and pray for an happy consociation with you. We dare not raise temples, dedicate altars, direct prayers to you; we dare not, finally, offer any thing to you which you are unwilling to receive, nor put any thing upon you, which you would disclaim as prejudicial to your Creator and Redeemer. It is abundant comfort to us that some part of us is in the fruition of that glory whereto we, the other poor labouring part, desire and strive to aspire; that our head and shoulders are above water, while the other limbs are yet wading through the stream.

SECT. XXV.—*A recapitulation and sum of the whole treatise.*

To wind up all: My son, if ever thou look for sound comfort on earth and salvation in heaven, unglue thyself from the world and the vanities of it; put thyself upon thy Lord and Saviour Jesus

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Christ; leave not till thou findest thyself firmly united to him, so as thou art become a limb of that body whereof he is head, a spouse of that husband, a branch of that stem, a stone laid upon that foundation. Look not therefore for any blessing out of him; and in and by and from him look for all blessings. Let him be thy life, and wish not to live longer than thou art quickened by him. Find him thy wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption; thy riches, thy strength, thy glory.

Apply unto thyself all that thy Saviour is or hath done[d]. Wouldest thou have the graces of God's Spirit? fetch them from his anointing. Wouldst thou have power against spiritual enemies? fetch it from his sovereignty. Wouldst thou have redemption? fetch it from his passion. Wouldst thou have absolution? fetch it from his perfect innocence: freedom from the curse? fetch it from his cross: satisfaction? fetch it from his sacrifice: cleansing from sin? fetch it from his blood: mortification? fetch it from his grave: newness of life? fetch it from his resurrection: right to heaven? fetch it from his purchase: audience in all thy suits? fetch it from his intercession. Wouldst thou have salvation? fetch it from his session at the right hand of Majesty. Wouldst thou have all? fetch it from him who is *one Lord, one God and Father of all, who is above all, through all, and in all,* Eph. iv. 5, 6.

And as thy faith shall thus interest thee in Christ thy Head, so let thy charity unite thee to his body the Church, both in earth and heaven. Hold ever an inviolable communion with that holy and blessed fraternity. Sever not thyself from it, either in judgment or affection. Make account there is not one of God's saints upon earth but hath a propriety in thee, and thou mayest challenge the same in each of them: so as thou canst not but be sensible of their passions, and be freely communicative of all thy graces and all serviceable offices, by example, admonition, exhortation, consolation, prayer, beneficence, for the good of that sacred community.

And when thou raisest up thine eyes to heaven, think of that glorious society of blessed saints who are gone before thee, and are now there triumphing and reigning in eternal and incomprehensible glory. Bless God for them, and wish thyself with them. Tread in their holy steps, and be ambitious of that crown of glory and immortality which thou seest shining on their heads.

[d] Hier. Zanch. Loc. Com. 8. de Symbolo Apost.

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THE CHRISTIAN;

LAID FORTH IN HIS

WHOLE DISPOSITION AND CARRIAGE.

BY JOS. HALL, D.D. AND B. N.

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AN EXHORTATORY

PREFACE TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

Out of infallible rules and long experience have I gathered up this true character of a Christian; a labour, some will think, which might have been well spared.

Every man professes both to know and act this part. Who is there that would not be angry if but a question should be made either of his skill or interest? Surely, since the first name given at Antioch, all the believing world hath been ambitious of the honour of it: how happy were it if all that are willing to wear the livery were as ready to do the service!

But it falls out here, as in the case of all things that are at once honourable and difficult, every one affects the title, few labour for the truth of the achievement.

Having therefore leisure enough to look about me, and finding the world too prone to this worst kind of hypocrisy, I have made this true draught; not more for direction than for trial. Let no man view these lines as a stranger, but, when he looks in this glass, let him ask his heart whether this be his own face; yea rather, when he sees this face, let him examine his heart,

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whether both of them agree with their pattern; and where he finds his failings, (as who shall not?) let him strive to amend them, and never give over, while he is any way less fair than his copy.

In the mean time, I would it were less easy, by these rules, to judge even of others besides ourselves; or that it were uncharitable to say, there are many professors, few Christians. If words and forms might carry it, Christ would have clients enow; but if holiness of disposition and uprightness of carriage must be the proof, woe is me! *In the midst of the land among the people, there is as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done,* Isa. xxiv. 13.

For where is the man that hath obtained the mastery of his corrupt affections, and to be the lord of his unruly appetite? that hath his heart in heaven, while his living carcass is stirring here upon earth? that can see the Invisible, and secretly enjoy that Saviour to whom he is spiritually united? that hath subdued his will and reason to his belief? that fears nothing but God, loves nothing but goodness, hates nothing but sin, rejoiceth in none but true blessings? whose faith triumphs over the world; whose hope is anchored in heaven; whose charity knows no less bounds than God and men; whose humility represents him as vile to himself as he is honourable in the reputation of God? who is wise heaven-ward, however he passes with the world; who dares be no other than just, whether he win or lose; who is frugally liberal, discreetly courageous, holily temperate? who is ever a thrifty manager of his hours, so dividing the day betwixt his God and his vocation that neither shall find fault with a just neglect or an unjust partiality? whose recreations are harmless, honest, warrantable; such as may refresh nature, not debauch it? whose diet is regulated by health, not by pleasure, as one whose table shall be no altar to his belly nor snare to his soul? who in his seasonable repose lies down and awakes with God; caring only to relieve his spirits, not to cherish sloth? whose carriage is meek, gentle, compliant, beneficial in whatsoever station; in magistracy, unpartially just; in the ministry, conscionably faithful; in the rule of his family, wisely provident and religiously exemplary? shortly, who is a discreet and loving yoke-fellow, a tender and pious parent, a duteous and awful son, an humble and obsequious servant, an obedient and loyal subject? whose heart is constantly settled in the main truths of Christian religion, so as he cannot be removed? in litigious points, neither too credulous nor too peremptory? whose discourse is such as may be meet for the expressions of a tongue that belongs to a sound, godly, and charitable heart? whose breast continually burns with the heavenly fire of an holy devotion? whose painful sufferings are overcome with patience and cheerful resolutions? whose conflicts are attended with undaunted courage, and crowned with an happy victory? lastly, whose death is not so full of fear and anguish, as of strong consolations in that Saviour who hath overcome and sweetened it; nor of so much dreadfulness in itself, as of joy in the present expectation of that blessed issue of a glorious immortality which instantly succeeds it?

Such is the Christian whom we do here characterise, and commend to the world both for trial and imitation. Neither know I which of these many qualifications can be missing in that soul who lays a just claim to Christ his Redeemer.

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Take your hearts to task therefore, my dear brethren, into whose hands soever these lines shall come, and as you desire to have peace at the last, ransack them thoroughly; not contenting yourselves with a perfunctory and fashionable oversight, which will one day leave you irremediably miserable; but so search, as those that resolve not to give over till you find these gracious dispositions in your bosoms which I have here described to you. So shall we be and make each other happy in the success of our holy labours: which the God of heaven bless in both our hands, to his own glory, and our mutual comfort in the day of the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ! *Amen.*

THE CHRISTIAN.

Sect. I.—*His disposition.*

The Christian is a man, and more; an earthly saint; an angel clothed in flesh; the only lawful image of his Maker and Redeemer; the abstract of God's Church on earth; a model of heaven, made up in clay; the living temple of the Holy Ghost.

For his disposition, it hath in it as much of heaven as his earth may make room for.

He were not a man, if he were quite free from corrupt affections: but these he masters, and keeps in with a strait hand; and if at any time they grow testy and headstrong, he breaks them with a severe discipline, and will rather punish himself than not tame them. He checks his appetite with discreet but strong denials, and forbears to pamper nature, lest it grow wanton and impetuous.

He walks on earth, but converses in heaven, having his eyes fixed on the Invisible, and enjoying a sweet communion with his God and Saviour. While all the rest of the world sits in darkness, he lives in a perpetual light: the heaven of heavens is open to none but him; thither his eye pierceth, and beholds those beams of inaccessible glory which shine in no face but his.

The deep mysteries of godliness, which to the great clerks of the world are as a book clasped and sealed up, lie open before him fair and legible, and while those book-men know whom they have heard of, he knows whom he hath believed.

He will not suffer his Saviour to be ever out of his eye; and if, through some worldly interceptions, he lose the sight of that blessed object for a time, he zealously retrieves him, not without an hungry check of his own miscarriage; and is now so much

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the more fixed by his former slackening, so as he will henceforth sooner part with his soul than his Redeemer.

The terms of entireness, wherein he stands with the Lord of life, are such as he can feel, but cannot express, though he should borrow the language of angels; it is enough that they two are one spirit.

His reason is willingly captivated to his faith; his will to his reason; and his affections to both.

He fears nothing that he sees in comparison of that which he sees not; and displeasure is more dreadful to him than smart.

Good is the adequate object of his love, which he duly proportions according to the degrees of its eminence; affecting the chief good, not without a certain ravishment of spirit; the lesser, with a wise and holy moderation.

Whether he do more hate sin, or the evil spirit that suggests it, is a question.

Earthly contents are too mean grounds whereon to raise his joy; these, as he balks not when they meet him in his way, so he doth not too eagerly pursue; he may taste of them, but so as he had rather fast than surfeit.

He is not insensible of those losses which casualty or enmity may inflict; but that which lies most heavily upon his heart is his sin. This makes his sleep short and troublesome; his meals stomachless; his recreations listless; his every thing tedious; till he find his soul acquitted by his great Surety in heaven: which done, he feels more peace and pleasure in his calm than he found horror in the tempest.

His heart is the storehouse of most precious graces. That faith whereby his soul is established triumphs over the world, whether it allure or threaten, and bids defiance to all the powers of darkness, not fearing to be foiled by any opposition. His hope cannot be discouraged with the greatest difficulties, but bears up against natural impossibilities, and knows how to reconcile contradictions. His charity is both extensive and fervent, barring out no one that bears the face of a man, but pouring out itself upon the household of faith; that studies good constructions of men and actions, and keeps itself free both from suspicion and censure.

Grace doth more exalt him than his humility depresses him. Were it not for that Christ who dwells in him, he could think himself the meanest of all creatures; now he knows he may not disparage the deity of him by whom he is so gloriously inhabited;

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in whose only right he can be as great in his own thoughts as he is despicable in the eyes of the world.

He is wise to Godward, however it be with him for the world; and well knowing he cannot serve two masters, he cleaves to the better, making choice of that good part which cannot be taken from him; not so much regarding to get that which he cannot keep, as to possess himself of that good which he cannot lose.

He is just in all his dealings with men, hating to thrive by injury and oppression, and will rather leave behind something of his own than filch from another's heap.

He is not closefisted where there is just occasion of his distribution; willingly parting with those metals which he regards only for use, not caring for either their colour or substance: earth is to him no other than itself, in what hue soever it appeareth.

In every good cause he is bold as a lion, and can neither fear faces nor shrink at dangers; and is rather heartened with opposition, pressing so much the more where he finds a large door open and many adversaries; and when he must suffer, doth as resolutely stoop as he did before valiantly resist.

He is holily temperate in the use of all God's blessings, as knowing by whom they are given, and to what end; neither dares either to mislay them or to mispend them lavishly; as duly weighing upon what terms he receives them, and fore-expecting an account.

Such an hand doth he carry upon his pleasures and delights, that they run not away with him; he knows how to slacken the reins without a debauched kind of dissoluteness, and how to straiten them without a sullen rigour.

Sect. II.—*His expense of the day.*

He lives as a man that hath borrowed his time, and challenges not to be owner of it; caring to spend the day in a gracious and well governed thrift.

His first morning's task, after he hath lifted up his heart to that God who gives his beloved sleep, shall be to put himself in a due posture wherein to entertain himself and the whole day; which shall be done, if he shall effectually work his thoughts to a right apprehension of his God, of himself, of all that may concern him.

The true posture of a Christian then, is this:—He sees still heaven open to him, and beholds and admires the light inacces-

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sible; he sees the all-glorious God ever before him, the angels of God about him, the evil spirits aloof off, enviously groaning and repining at him; the world under his feet, willing to rebel, but forced to be subject; the good creatures ready to tender their service to him; and is accordingly affected to all these. He sees heaven open, with joy and desire of fruition; he sees God, with an adoring awfulness; he sees the angels, with a thankful acknowledgment and care not to offend them; he sees the evil spirits, with hatred and watchful indignation; he sees the world, with an holy imperiousness, commanding it for use, and scorning to stoop to it for observance; lastly, he sees the good creatures, with gratulation, and care to improve them to the advantage of him that lent them.

Having thus gathered up his thoughts, and found where he is, he may now be fit for his constant devotion; which he falls upon, not without a trembling veneration of that infinite and incomprehensible Majesty before whom he is prostrate; now he climbs up into that heaven which he before did but behold, and solemnly pours out his soul in hearty thanksgivings and humble supplications into the bosom of the Almighty; wherein his awe is so tempered with his faith, that while he labours under the sense of his own vileness he is raised up in the confidence of an infinite mercy. Now he renews his feeling interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, his blessed Redeemer, and labours to get in every breath new pledges of his gracious entireness; so seasoning his heart with these early thoughts of piety, as that they stick by him all the day after.

Having thus begun with his God and begged his blessing, he now finds time to address himself to the works of his calling.

To live without any vocation, to live in an unwarrantable vocation, not to labour in the vocation wherein he lives, are things which his soul hateth. These businesses of his calling, therefore, he follows with a willing and contented industry; not as forced to it by the necessity of human laws, or as urged by the law of necessity out of the sense or fear of want, nor yet, contrarily, out of an eager desire of enriching himself in his estate; but in a conscionable obedience to that God who hath made man to labour as the sparks to fly upward, and hath laid it upon him both as a punishment and charge, *In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread.*

In an humble alacrity he walks on in the way wherein his God hath set him; yet not the while so intent upon his hands as not to

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tend his heart, which he lifts up in frequent ejaculations to that God to whom he desires to be approved in all his endeavours, ascribing all the thanks, both of his ability and success, to that omnipotent hand. If he meet with any rubs of difficulty in his way, he knows who sent them and who can remove them; not neglecting any prudential means of remedy, he is not to seek for an higher redress.

If he have occasion of trading with others, his will may not be the rule of his gain, but his conscience; neither dares he strive for what he can get, but what he ought. Equity is here the clerk of the market; and the measure which he would have others mete out to himself is the standard whereby he desires to be tried in his mensurations to all other. He hates to hoist prices upon occasion of his neighbour's need, and to take the advantage of forfeits by the clock. He is not such a slave to his trade as not to spare an hour to his soul; neither dares he be so lavish as utterly to neglect his charge, upon whatever pretence of pleasure or devotion.

Shortly, he takes his work at the hand of God, and leaves it with him, humbly offering up his services to his great Master in heaven; and after all his labour sits comfortably down in the conscience of having faithfully done his task, though not without the intervention of many infirmities.

Sect. III.—*His recreations.*

His recreations (for even these human frailty will sometimes call for) are such as may be meet relaxations to a mind over bent, and a body tired with honest and holy employments; safe, inoffensive, and for time and measure fitly proportioned to the occasion; like unto soft music betwixt two long and stirring acts; like unto some quick and savoury sauce to a listless and cloyed stomach; like unto a sweet nap after an overwatching.

He is far from those delights that may effeminate or corrupt the mind, abhorring to sit by those pleasures from which he shall not rise better.

He hates to turn pastime into trade; not abiding to spend more time in whetting than till his edge be sharp. In the height of his delectations he knows to enjoy God; from whom, as he fetches his allowance, so he craves and expects a gracious acceptation, even when he lets himself most loose. And if at any time he have gone beyond his measure, he chides himself

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for the excess, and is so much the more careful ever after to keep within compass.

He can only make a kind of use of those contentments wherein light minds are transported; and can manage his disports without passion, and leave, a loser, without regret.

A smile to him is as much as a loud laughter to the worlding; neither doth he entertain mirth as his ordinary attendant, but as his retainer, to wait upon his serious occasions; and, finally, so rejoiceth, as if he rejoiced not.

Sect. IV.—*His meals.*

His meals are such as nature requires and grace moderates; not pinching himself with a penurious niggardliness, nor pampering himself with a wanton excess. His plate is the least part of his care; so as his fare may be wholesome, he stands not upon delicacy.

He dares not put his hand to the dish till he have looked up to the Owner, and hates to put one morsel into his mouth unblessed; and knows it his duty to give thanks for what he hath paid for; as well considering, that neither the meat that he eats, nor the hand and mouth that receives it, nor the maw that digests it, nor the metal that buys it, is of his own making.

And now, having fed his belly, not his eye, he rises from his board satisfied, not glutted; and so bestirs himself upon his calling, as a man not more unwieldy by his repast but more cheerful, and as one that would be loath his gut should be any hinderance to his brain or to his hand.

If he shall have occasion to entertain himself and his friends more liberally, he dares not lose himself and his feast. He can be soberly merry and wisely free; only in this he is willing not to be his own man, in that he gives himself for the time to his guests. His caterer is friendly thrift; and temperance keeps the board's end, and carves to every one the best measure of enough.

As for his own diet when he is invited to a tempting variety, he puts his knife to his throat; neither dares he feed without fear, as knowing who overlooks him.

Obscenity, detraction, scurrility are barred from his table; neither do any words sound there that are less savoury than the dishes.

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Lastly, he so feeds, as if he sought for health in those viands, and not pleasure; as if he did eat to live; and rises, not more replenished with food than with thankfulness.

Sect. V.—*His night's rest.*

In a due season he betakes himself to his rest. He presumes not to alter the ordinance of day and night, nor dares confound where distinction is made by his Maker.

It is not with him as with the brute creatures, that have nothing to look after but the mere obedience of nature. He doth not therefore lay himself down as the swine in the sty, or a dog in the kennel, without any further preface to his desired sleep; but improves those faculties, which he is now closing up, to a meet preparation for an holy repose.

For which purpose, he first casts back his eye to the now expired day, and seriously considers how he hath spent it; and will be sure to make his reckonings even with his God, before he part. Then he lifts up his eyes and his heart to that God who hath made the night for man to rest in, and recommends himself earnestly to his blessed protection; and then closeth his eyes in peace, not without a serious meditation of his last rest: his bed represents to him his grave; his linen, his windingsheet; his sleep, death; the night, the many days of darkness: and, shortly, he so composeth his soul as if he looked not to wake till the morning of the resurrection.

After which, if he sleep, he is thankfully cheerful; if he sleep not, his reins chasten and instruct him in the night season; and if sleep be out of his eyes, yet God and his angels are not: whensoever he awakes, in those hands he finds himself; and therefore rests sweetly even when he sleeps not. His very dreams, however vain or troublesome, are not to him altogether unprofitable, for they serve to bewray, not only his bodily temper, but his spiritual weaknesses, which his waking resolutions shall endeavour to correct.

He so applies himself to his pillow, as a man that meant not to be drowned in sleep, but refreshed; not limiting his rest by the insatiable lust of a sluggish and drowsy stupidness, but by the exigence of his health, and habilitation to his calling; and rises from it, not too late, with more appetite to his work than to a second slumber; cheerfully devoting the strength renewed by his late rest to the honour and service of the Giver.

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SECT. VI.—*His carriage.*

His carriage is not strange, insolent, surly, and overly contemptuous, but familiarly meek, humble, courteous; as knowing what mould he is made of, and not knowing any worse man than himself.

He hath an hand ready upon every occasion to be helpful to his neighbour; as if he thought himself made to do good. He hates to sell his breath to his friend, where his advice may be useful; neither is more ambitious of any thing under heaven than of doing good offices.

It is his happiness if he can reconcile quarrels, and make peace between dissenting friends.

When he is chosen an umpire, he will be sure to cut even betwixt both parties, and commonly displeaseth both, that he may wrong neither.

If he be called forth to magistracy, he puts off all private interests, and commands friendship to give place to justice. Now he knows no cousins, no enemies; neither cousins for favour, nor enemies for revenge; but looks right forward to the cause, without squinting aside to the persons. No flattery can keep him from browbeating of vice; no fear can work him to discourage virtue. Where severity is requisite, he hates to enjoy another's punishment; and where mercy may be more prevalent, he hates to use severity. Power doth not render him imperious and oppressive, but rather humbles him in the awful expectation of his account.

If he be called to the honour of God's embassy to his people, he dares not but be faithful in delivering that sacred message. He cannot now either fear faces or respect persons. It is equally odious to him to hide and smother any of God's counsel, and to foist in any of his own; to suppress truth, and to adulterate it. He speaks not himself, but Christ; and labours not to tickle the ear, but to save souls. So doth he go before his flock, as one that means to feed them no less by his example than by his doctrine; and would condemn himself, if he did not live the gospel as well as preach it. He is neither too austere in his retiredness nor too good-cheap in his sociableness; but carries so even an hand, that his discreet affableness may be free from contempt, and that he may win his people with a loving conversation. If any of his charge be miscarried into an error of opinion, he labours to reclaim him by the spirit of meekness; so as the misguided may read nothing but love in his zealous conviction. If any be drawn into

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a vicious course of life, he fetches him back with a gentle yet powerful hand; by an holy importunity, working the offender to a sense of his own danger, and to a saving penitence.

Is he the master of a family? he dares not be a lion in his own house, cruelly tyrannizing over his meanest drudge; but so moderately exercises his power, as knowing himself to be his apprentice's fellow servant. He is the mouth of his meiny to God, in his daily devotions; offering up for them the calves of his lips in his morning and evening sacrifice; and the mouth of God unto them, in his wholesome instructions, and all holy admonitions. He goes before them in good examples of piety and holy conversation, and so governs, as one that hath more than mere bodies committed to his charge.

Is he the husband of a wife? he carries his yoke even: not laying too much weight upon the weaker neck. His helper argues him the principal, and he so knows it, that he makes a wise use of his just inequality; so remembering himself to be the superior, as that he can be no other than one flesh. He maintains, therefore, his moderate authority with a conjugal love; so holding up the right of his sex, that in the mean time he doth not violently clash with the brittler vessel. As his choice was not made by weight, or by the voice, or by the hue of the hide, but for pure affection grounded upon virtue; so the same regards hold him close to a constant continuance of his chaste love, which can never yield either to change or intermission.

Is he a father of children? he looks upon them as more God's than his own, and governs them accordingly. He knows it is only their worse part which they have received from his loins; their diviner half is from the Father of lights, and is now become the main part of his charge. As God gave them to him, and to the world by him, so his chief care is that they may be begotten again to God; that they may put off that corrupt nature which they took from him, and be made partakers of that divine nature which is given them in their regeneration. For this cause he trains them up in all virtuous and religious education; he sets them in their way, corrects their exorbitances, restrains their wild desires, and labours to frame them to all holy dispositions; and so bestows his fatherly care upon and for them, as one that had rather they should be good than rich, and would wish them rather dead than debauched. He neglects not all honest means of their provision, but the highest point he aims at is to leave God their patrimony.

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In the choice of their calling or match, he propounds, but forces not, as knowing they have also wills of their own, which it is fitter for him to bow than to break.

Is he a son? he is such as may be fit to proceed from such loins.

Is he a servant? he cannot but be officious, for he must please two masters, though one under, not against the other: when his visible master sees him not, he knows he cannot be out of the eye of the Invisible, and therefore dares not be either negligent or unfaithful. The work that he undertakes he goes through, not out of fear, but out of conscience; and would do his business no otherwise than well, though he served a blind master. He is no blab of the defects at home; and where he cannot defend, is ready to excuse. He yields patiently to a just reproof, and answers with an humble silence; and is more careful not to deserve than to avoid stripes.

Is he a subject? he is awfully affected to sovereignty, as knowing by whom the powers are ordained. He dares not curse the king, no, not in his thought, nor revile the ruler of his people, though justly faulty; much less dare he slander the footsteps of God's anointed. He submits, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake, to every ordinance of God; yea, to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake; not daring to disobey in regard of the oath of God. If he have reached forth his hand to cut off but the skirt of the royal robe, his heart smites him. He is a true paymaster, and willingly renders tribute to whom tribute, custom to whom custom, honour to whom honour is due, and justly divides his duties betwixt God and Cæsar.

Finally, in whatever relation he stands, he is diligent, faithful, conscionable; observant of his rule, and careful to be approved such, both to God and men.

Sect. VII.—*His resolution in matter of religion.*

He hath fully informed himself of all the necessary points of religion, and is so firmly grounded in those fundamental and saving truths, that he cannot be carried about with every wind of doctrine. As for collateral and unmaterial verities, he neither despiseth nor yet doth too eagerly pursue them.

He lists not to take opinions upon trust; neither dares absolutely follow any guide, but those who he knows could not err.

He is ever suspicious of new faces of theological truths, and cannot think it safe to walk in untrodden paths.

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Matters of speculation are not unwelcome to him, but his chief care is to reduce his knowledge to practice; and therefore he holds nothing his own but what his heart hath appropriated, and his life acted.

He dares not be too much wedded to his own conceit, and hath so much humility as to think the whole Church of Christ upon earth wiser than himself.

However he be a great lover of constancy, yet, upon better reason, he can change his mind in some litigious and unimporting truths, and can be silent where he must dissent.

Sect. VIII.—*His discourse.*

His discourse is grave, discreet, pertinent; free from vanity, free from offence.

In secular occasions, nothing falls from him but seasonable and well-advised truths; in spiritual, his speech is such as both argues grace and works it.

No foul and unsavoury breath proceeds out of his lips, which he abides not to be tainted with any rotten communication, with any slanderous detraction. If in a friendly merriment he let his tongue loose to an harmless urbanity, that is the farthest he dares go; scorning to come within the verge of a base scurrility.

He is not apt to spend himself in censures; but as for revilings and cursed speakings against God or men, those his soul abhorreth.

He knows to reserve his thoughts by locking them up in his bosom under a safe silence; and when he must speak, dares not to be too free of his tongue, as well knowing, that in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin.

His speeches are no other than seasonable, and well fitted both to the person and occasion. Jigs at a funeral, lamentations at a feast, holy counsel to scorners, discouragements to the dejected, and applauses to the profane, are hateful to him.

He meddles not with other men's matters, much less with affairs of state; but keeps himself wisely within his own compass, not thinking his breath well spent, where he doth not either teach or learn.

Sect. IX.—*His devotion.*

He is so perpetually resident in heaven, that he is often in every day before the throne of grace; and he never comes there without supplication in his hand: wherein also he lovesto be importunate: and he speeds accordingly; for he never departs empty;

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while other cold suitors, that come thither but in some good fits of devotion, obtain nothing but denials.

He dares not press to God's footstool in his own name; he is conscious enough of his own unworthiness; but he comes in the gracious and powerful name of his righteous Mediator, in whom he knows he cannot but be accepted; and in an humble boldness, for his only sake craves mercy.

No man is either more awful or more confident.

When he hath put up his petition to the King of heaven, he presumes not to stint the time or manner of God's condescent, but patiently and faithfully waits for the good hour, and leaves himself upon that infinite wisdom and goodness.

He doth not affect length so much as fervour; neither so much minds his tongue as his heart.

His prayers are suited according to the degrees of the benefits sued for. He therefore begs grace absolutely, and temporal blessings with limitation; and is accordingly affected in the grant.

Neither is he more earnest in craving mercies, than he is zealously desirous to be retributory to God when he hath received them; not more heartily suing to be rich in grace, than to improve his graces to the honour and advantage of the bestower.

With an awful and broken heart doth he make his addresses to that infinite Majesty, from whose presence he returns with comfort and joy.

His soul is constantly fixed there, whither he pours it out. Distraction and distrust are shut out from his closet; and he is so taken up with his devotion, as one that makes it his work to pray. And when he hath offered up his sacrifices unto God, his faith listens and looks in at the door of heaven to know how they are taken.

Sect. X.—*His sufferings.*

Every man shows fair in prosperity, but the main trial of the Christian is in suffering; any man may steer in a good gale and clear sea, but the mariner's skill will be seen in a tempest.

Herein the Christian goes beyond the pagan's, not practice only, but admiration: *We rejoice in tribulation,* saith the Chosen Vessel. Lo here a point transcending all the affectation of heathenism! Perhaps some resolute spirit, whether out of a natural fortitude, or out of an ambition of fame or earthly glory, may set a face upon a patient enduring of loss or pain; but never any of those heroic Gentiles durst pretend to a joy in suffering. Hither

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can Christian courage reach, knowing that *tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed.*

Is he bereaved of his goods and worldly estate? he comforts himself in the conscience of a better treasure that can never be lost. Is he afflicted with sickness? his comfort is, that the inward man is so much more renewed daily as the outward perisheth. Is he slandered and unjustly disgraced? his comfort is, that there is a blessing which will more than make him amends. Is he banished? he knows he is on his way homeward. Is he imprisoned? his spirit cannot be locked in; God and his angels cannot be locked out. Is he dying? to him *to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* Is he dead? he *rests from his labours*, and is crowned with glory. Shortly, he is perfect gold, that comes more pure out of the fire than it went in; neither had ever been so great a saint in heaven, if he had not passed through the flames of this trial here upon earth.

Sect. XI.—*His conflicts.*

He knows himself never out of danger, and therefore stands ever upon his guard. Neither of his hands is empty; the one holds out the shield of faith, the other manageth the sword of the Spirit: both of them are employed in his perpetual conflict.

He cannot be weary of resisting, but resolves to die fighting.

He hath a ward for every blow; and as his eye is quick to discern temptations, so is his hand and foot nimble to avoid them.

He cannot be discouraged with either the number or power of his enemies; knowing that his strength is out of himself, in him in whom he can do all things, and that there can be no match to the Almighty.

He is careful not to give advantage to his vigilant adversary, and therefore warily avoids the occasions of sin; and if at any time he be overtaken with the suddenness or subtlety of temptation, he speedily recovers himself by a serious repentance, and fights so much the harder, because of his foil.

He hates to take quarter of the spiritual powers; nothing less than death can put an end to his quarrel, nor nothing below victory.

Sect. XII.—*His death.*

He is not so careful to keep his soul within his teeth, as to send it forth well addressed for happiness; as knowing, therefore, the

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last brunt to be most violent, he rouseth up his holy fortitude to encounter that king of fear, his last enemy, death.

And now, after a painful sickness and a resolute expectation of the fiercest assault, it falls out with him as in the meeting of the two hostile brothers, Jacob and Esau; instead of grappling, he finds a courteous salutation; for stabs, kisses; for height of enmity, offices of love. Life could never befriend him so much as death offers to do; that tenders him (perhaps a rough, but) a sure hand to lead him to glory, and receives a welcome accordingly.

Neither is there any cause to marvel at the change. The Lord of life hath wrought it; he, having by dying subdued death, hath reconciled it to his own; and hath as it were beaten it into these fair terms with all the members of his mystical body; so as, while unto the enemies of God death is still no other than a terrible executioner of divine vengeance, he is to all that are in Christ a plausible and sure convoy unto blessedness.

The Christian therefore, now laid upon his last bed, when this grim messenger comes to fetch him to heaven, looks not so much at his dreadful visage as at his happy errand; and is willing not to remember what death is in itself, but what it is to us in Christ, by whom it is made so useful and beneficial, that we could not be happy without it.

Here then comes in the last act and employment of faith; for after this brunt passed, there is no more use of faith, but of vision: that heartens the soul in a lively apprehension of that blessed Saviour, who both led him the way of suffering and is making way for him to everlasting glory; that shows him *Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God:* that clings close unto him, and lays unremovable hold upon his person, his merits, his blessedness. Upon the wings of this faith is the soul ready to mount up toward that heaven which is open to receive it; and in that act of evolation puts itself into the hands of those blessed angels who are ready to carry it up to the throne of glory.

SIC, O SIC JUVAT VIVERE, SIC PERIRE!

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SATAN'S FIERY DARTS QUENCHED:

OR,

TEMPTATIONS REPELLED.

IN THREE DECADES.

FOR THE HELP, COMFORT, AND PRESERVATION OF WEAK CHRISTIANS, IN THESE DANGEROUS TIMES OF ERROR AND SEDUCTION.

BY JOS. HALL, D.D. and B. N.

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER,

GRACE AND PEACE.

Some few months are past, since a worthy and eminent divine from the west[a], once part of my charge, earnestly moved me to undertake this task of Temptations; seconding his letters with the lines of a dear intercessor from those parts.

Upon the first view I slighted the motion, returning only this answer, That I remembered this work was already so completely performed by the reverend and learned Mr. Downame, in his "Christian Warfare," as that whoso should meddle with this subject should but seem to glean after his sickle.

But when I had sadly considered the matter, my second thoughts told me, that there is no one point of divinity wherein many pens have not profitably laboured in several forms of discourse; and that the course which I was solicited unto was in a quite different way of tractation, namely, to furnish my fellow Christians with short and punctual answers to the particular suggestions of our great enemy; and that our deplored age had rifely yielded public temptations of impiety, which durst not look forth into the world in those happy days. I was thereupon soon convinced in myself how useful and beneficial such a tractate might be to weak souls; and embraced the motion, as sent from God, whose good hand I found sensibly with me in the pursuance of it.

[a] Mr. Hannibal Gammon, of Cornwall.

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I therefore cheerfully addressed myself to the work: wherein what I have essayed or done, I humbly leave to the judgment of others; with only this, that if in this treatise my decrepit hand can have let fall any thing that may be to the service of God's Church, to the raising up of drooping hearts, to the convincing of blasphemous errors, to the preventing of the dangerous insinuations of wickedness, I desire to be thankful to my good God, whose grace hath been pleased to improve those few sands that remain in my glass to so happy an advantage. That God, the Father of all mercies, fetch from these poor labours of his weak servant much glory to his own name, and much benefit to the souls of his people.

And may the same God be pleased to stir up the hearts of all his faithful ones, that shall, through his goodness, receive any help by these well-meant endeavours, to interchange their prayers with and for me, the unworthiest of his ministers, that I may finish the small remainder of my course with joy. Amen.

From my Cottage at Higham,
near Norwich; Feb. 12, 1646.

TEMPTATIONS REPELLED.

THE FIRST DECADE.

TEMPTATIONS OF IMPIETY.

1st TEMPTATION:—"Foolish sinner, thou leanest upon a broken reed, while thou reposest all thy trust in a crucified Saviour:"—*Repelled.*

Blasphemous spirit! It is not the ignominy of the cross that can blemish the honour of my Saviour. Thou feelest, to thy endless pain and regret, that he who would die upon the tree of shame hath triumphed victoriously over death and all the powers of hell. The greater his abasement was, the greater is the glory of his mercy. He that is the eternal God, would put on man, that he might work man's redemption, and satisfy God for man. Who but a man could suffer? and who but a God could conquer by sufferings? It is man that had sinned; it is God that was offended: who but he that was God and man could reconcile God unto man? *He was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth,* and triumpheth, *in the power of his* omnipotent *Godhead,* 2 Cor. xiii. 4. Neither was it so much weakness to yield unto death, as

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it was power to vanquish it. Yea, in this very dying there was strength; for here was no violence that could force him into his grave: who should offer it? *I and the Father are one,* saith that Word of Truth; and in unity there can be no constraint: and, if the persons be diverse, *He thought it not robbery to be equal with God* the Father, Phil. ii. 6; and there is no authority over equals. And, for men or devils, what could they do to the Lord of Life? *I lay down my life,* saith the Almighty Redeemer, *that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again,* John x. 17, 18. O infiniteness, both of power and mercy, met in the centre of a willing death!

Impudent tempter, dost thou not remember thine own language? The time was, indeed, when thou couldest say, *If thou be the Son of God,* Matt. iv. 3, 6; but when thou foundest thyself quelled by divine power, and sawest those miraculous works fall from him which were only proper to an infinite Godhead; now thou wert forced to confess, *I know who thou art, even the Holy One of God,* Mark i. 24: and again, *Jesus, the Son of the Most High God,* Mark v. 7: and yet again, *What have we to do with thee, Jesus, the Son of God? art thou come to torment us before the time?* Matt. viii. 29. Lo then, even in the time of his human weakness, thou couldest with horror enough acknowledge him the Son of the Most High God: and darest thou, now that he sits crowned with celestial glory, disparage his ever blessed Deity?

Thy malice hath raised up, as in the former so in these later days, certain cursed imps of heretical pravity; who, under the name of Christians, have wickedly *re-crucified the Lord that bought them;* not sparing to call into question the eternal Deity of him whom they dare call Saviour: whom if thou hadst not steeled with an hellish impudence, certainly they could not profess to admit the Word written, and yet the while deny the Personal Word. How clear testimony doth the one of them give to the other! When thou presumedst to set upon the Son of God by thy personal temptations, he stopt thy mouth with a *scriptum est;* how much more shall these pseudo-Christian agents of thine be thus convinced!

Surely there is no truth wherein those oracles of God have been more clear and punctual.

Are we not there required to believe in him as God, upon the promise of eternal life, John iii. 15; under the pain of everlasting

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condemnation? ver. 18. Are we not commanded to baptize in his name, as God? Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts ii. 38. Is not the Holy Ghost given as a seal to that baptism? Acts x. 47, 48. Are we not charged to give divine honour to him? Ps. xxii. 27. Is not this required and reported to be done, not only by the kings of the earth, Ps. lxxii. 11, 15, but by the saints and angels in heaven? Rev. v. 11, 12, and iv. 9, 10, 11. Is he not there declared to be *equal with God?* Phil. ii. 6. Is he not there asserted to be one with the Father? John x. 30; 1 John v. 7. Doth he not there challenge a joint right with the Father in all things, both in heaven and earth? John xvi. 15; xvii. 10.

Are not the great works of divine power attributed to him? Hath not he created the earth, and man upon it? Have not his hands stretched out the heavens? Hath not he commanded all their host? Isa. xlv. 12; Ps. xxxiii. 6, and cii. 25.

Are not all the attributes of God his? Is he not eternal? Is it not he of whom the Psalmist, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre?* Psalm xlv. 6. Is not he the *Father of eternity?* Isa. ix. 6: the *First and Last?* Rev. i. 17. Have not *his goings forth been from everlasting?* Micah v. 2. Had not he *glory with the Father before the world was?* John xvii. 5. Is not he the *Word, which was in the beginning; the Word that was with God, and the Word that was God?* John i. 1. Is he not infinite and incomprehensible? Is it not he that *filleth all things?* Eph. iv. 10; that was in heaven, while he was on earth? John iii. 13. Is he not *Almighty?* Rev. i. 8: even the *mighty God,* who *upholds all things by the word of his power?* Isa. xix. 6. Yea, is he not expressly styled *the Lord Jehovah; the Lord of hosts; God blessed for ever; the true God, and eternal life; the great God and Saviour; the Lord of glory?* Isa. xl. 3; xlv. 21, 22, 13; vi. 3; Rom. ix. 5; 1 John v. 20; Tit. ii. 13; 1 Cor. ii. 8.

Hath he not abundantly convinced the world of his Godhead, by those miraculous works which he did, both in his own person while he was here on earth, and by the hands of his followers? works so transcending the possibility of nature, that they could not be wrought by any less than the God of nature: as, ejecting of devils by command; raising the dead after degrees of putrefaction; giving eyes to the born blind; conquering death in his own resuscitation; ascending gloriously into heaven; charming

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the winds and waters; healing diseases by the very shadow of his transient disciples?

Yea, tell me by what power was it that thine oracles, whereby all the world was held in superstition, were silenced? what power, whereby the gospel, so opposite to flesh and blood, hath conquered the world, and in spite of all the violence of tyrants and oppugnation of rebellious nature hath prevailed?

Upon all these grounds, how can I do less than cry out with the late believing disciple, *My Lord and my God?* John xx. 28.

Malignant spirit, thou dost but set a face of checking me by my Saviour's cross. Thou knowest and feelest that it was the chariot of his triumph, whereupon being exalted, he dragged all the powers of hell captive after him, making a show of them openly, to their confusion and his glory, Col. ii. 15. Thou knowest that, had it not been for that cross, those infernal regions of thine had been peopled with whole mankind, a great part whereof is now delivered out of thy hands by that victorious redemption. Never had heaven been so stored, never had hell been so foiled, if it had not been for that cross.

And canst thou think to daunt me with the mention of that cross, which by the eternal decree of God was determined to be the means of the deliverance of all the souls of the elect? Dost thou not hear the prophet say of old, *He was cut off from the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death. He hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many?* Isa. liii. 8, 9, 12. Didst thou not hear my Saviour himself, after his glorious resurrection, checking Cleopas and his fellow-traveller for their ignorance of this predetermination? *O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?* Luke xxiv. 25, 26.

Yea, lastly, when had my Saviour more glory than in this very act of his ignominious suffering and crucifixion? It is true, there hangs the Son of man, despicably upon the tree of shame; he is mocked, spit upon, buffeted, scourged, nailed, reviled, dead; Luke xxiii. 35, 36: now have men and devils done their worst; but this while is the Son of God acknowledged and magnified in his almighty power, both by earth and heaven. The sun, for three

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hours, hides his head in darkness, as hating to behold this tort offered to his Creator: the earth quakes to bear the weight of this suffering; the rocks rend in pieces; the dead rise from their graves to see and wonder at and attend their late dying and now risen Saviour; the vail of the temple tears from the top to the bottom, for the blasphemous indignity offered to the God of the temple; and the centurion, upon sight of all this, is forced to say, *Truly this was the Son of God,* Matt. xxvi. 50—54.

And now, after all these irrefragable attestations, his Easter makes abundant amends for his Passion. There could not be so much weakness in dying as there was power in rising from death. His resurrection proves him the Lord of life and death, and shows that he died not out of necessity but will; since he that could shake off the grave, could with more ease have avoided death: O then the happy and glorious conquest of my blessed Saviour, *declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead!* Rom. i. 4.

Go now, wicked spirit, and twit me with the cross of my Saviour. That which thou objectedst to me as my shame is my only glory: *God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of my Lord Jesus Christ; whereby the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world,* Gal. vi. 14.

IInd TEMPTATION:—"Still thou hast upon all occasions recourse to the Scriptures, as some Divine oracles, and thinkest thou mayest safely build thy soul upon every text of that written word, as inspired from heaven; whereas indeed this is nothing but an human device to keep men in awe, and never came nearer heaven than the brains of those politicians that invented it:"—*Repelled.*

Wicked spirit! when thou presumedst personally to tempt my Saviour, and hadst that cursed mouth stopped by him with an *It is written,* thou daredst not then to raise such a blasphemous suggestion against this word of truth. Success in wickedness hath made thee more impudent, and now thou art bold to strike despitefully at the very root of religion. But know, that after all thy malicious detractions, this word shall stand, when heaven and earth shall vanish; and is that whereby both thou and all thy complices shall be judged at that great day.

It is not more sure that there is a God, than that this God ought to be served and worshipped by the creature. Neither is it more sure that God is, than that he is most wise, most just,

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most holy. This most wise, just, and holy God, then, requiring and expecting to be served and worshipped by his creature, must of necessity have imparted his will to his creature, how and in what manner he would be served, and what he would have man to believe concerning himself and his proceedings; else man should be left to utter uncertainties, and there should be a failing of those ends which the infinite Wisdom and Justice hath proposed to itself.

There must be therefore some word of God wherein he hath revealed himself to man: and that this is and must be acknowledged to be that only word, it is clear and evident; for that there neither was, nor is, nor can be any other word, that could or durst stand in competition or rivality with this word of the eternal God: and if any other have presumed to offer a contestation, it hath soon vanished into contempt and shame. Moreover, this is the only word which God owns for his, under no less style than *Thus saith the Lord;* which the Son of God hath so acknowledged for the genuine word of his eternal Father, as that out of it, as such, he hath pleased to refell both thy suggestions and the malicious arguments of his Jewish opposites.

It drives wholly at the glory of God, not sparing to disparage those very persons whose pens are employed in it, in blazoning their own infirmities in what they have offended; which could not have been, if those pens had not been guided by an higher hand. It discovers and oppugns the corruptions of nature, which to mere men are either hid, or, if revealed, are cherished and upheld. It lays forth the misery and danger of our estate under sin, and the remedies and means of our deliverance, which no other word hath ever pretended to undertake.

Besides that there is such a majesty in the style wherein it is written as is unimitable by any human author whatsoever, the matter of it is wholly divine; aiming altogether at purity of worship and integrity of life; not admitting of any the least mixture, either of idolatry and superstition, or of any plausible enormities of life, but unpartially laying forth God's judgments against these and whatever other wickednesses.

This word reveals those things which never could be known to the world by any human skill or industry; as the creation of the world, and the order and decrees of it, and the course of God's administration of it from the beginning, thousands of years before any records of history were extant; as it was only the Spirit of

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the most high God in Daniel that could fetch back and give an account of a vision forepassed; all the soothsayers and magicians confess this a work of no less than divine omniscience.

And as for things future, the predictions of this word of things to be done after many hundreds, yea some thousands of years, the events having then no pre-existence in their causes, being accordingly accomplished, show it to proceed from an absolute, unfailing, and therefore infinite prescience.

And whereas there are two parts of this word, the Law and the Gospel; the Law is more exact than human brains can reach unto, meeting with those aberrations which the most wise and curious lawgivers could not give order for, extending itself to those very thoughts which nature knows not to accuse or restrain: the Gospel is made good, as by the signs and wonders wrought in all the primitive ages, so by the powerful operation that it hath upon the soul, such as the word of the most prudent man on earth, or of the greatest angel in heaven should in vain hope to parallel. And whereas the penmen of both these were prophets and apostles; the prophets are sufficiently attested by the apostles to be men holy and inspired by the Holy Ghost, 2 Pet i. 21: the apostles are abundantly attested by the Holy Ghost poured out upon them in their Pentecost; and, besides variety of tongues, enabling them to do such miraculous works as astonished and convinced their very enemies. To these may be added the perfect harmony of the Law and the Gospel; the Law being a prefigured Gospel, and the Gospel a Law consummate; both of them lively setting forth Christ, the Redeemer of the world, both future and exhibited.

Neither is it lightly to be esteemed, that this word hath been by holy men in all ages received as of sacred and divine authority: men whose lives and deaths have approved them eminent saints of God; who have not only professed but sealed with their blood this truth, which they had learned from him that was rapt into the third heaven, that *all scripture is given by inspiration of God*, 2 Tim. iii. *16*; a truth which cannot but be contested[b] by their own hearts, which have sensibly found the power of this word convincing them of sin; working effectually in them a lively faith and unfeigned conversion, which no human means could ever have effected.

Lastly, it is a strong evidence to my soul, that this is no other

[b] [The word has become obsolete in the sense in which it is used here—but in its strict derivative sense it cannot be misunderstood.]

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than the word of a God, that I find it so eagerly opposed by thee and all thy malignant instruments in all ages. Philosophers, both natural and moral and politic, have left large volumes behind them in their several professions; all which are suffered to live in peace, and to enjoy their opinions with freedom and leave: but so soon as ever this sacred book of God looks forth into the world, hell is in an uproar, and raises all the forces of malice and wit and violence against it. Wherefore would it be thus, if there were not some more divine thing in these holy leaves than in all the monuments of learned humanity? But the protection is yet more convictive than the opposition: that, notwithstanding all the machinations of the powers of darkness, this word is preserved entire; that the simplicity of it prevails against all worldly policy; that the power of it subdues all nations, and triumphs over all the wickedness of men and devils; it is proof enough to me that the God of heaven is both the author and owner and giver of it.

Shortly, then, let my soul be built upon this rocky foundation of the prophets and apostles; let thy storms rise, and thy floods come, and thy winds blow, and beat upon it; it shall mock at thy fury, and shall stand firm against all the rage of hell, Matt. vii. 24, 25.

IIIrd TEMPTATION :—"Art thou so sottish to suffer thy understanding to be captivated to I know not what divine authority, proposing unto thee things contrary to sense and reason, and therefore absurd and impossible? Be thou no other than thyself, a man; and follow the light and guidance of that which makes thee so, right reason; and whatsoever disagrees from that, turn it off as no part of thy belief, to those superstitious bigots which are willing to lose their reason in their faith, and to bury their brains in their heart:"—*Repelled.*

Wicked tempter! thou wishest me to my loss. Woe were to me if I were but a man, and if I had no better guide to follow than that which thou callest reason.

It is from nature that I am a man; it is from grace that I am a man regenerate. Nature holds forth to me as a man the dim and weak rush candlelight of carnal reason; the grace of regeneration shows me the bright torchlight; yea, the sun of divine illumination.

Thou biddest me, as a man, to follow the light of reason; God

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bids me, as a regenerate man, to follow the light of faith; whether should I believe? whether should I listen to?

It is true, that reason is the great gift of my Creator, and that which was intended to distinguish us from brute creatures; but where is it, in the original purity, to be found under heaven? Surely it can now appear to us in no other shape than either as corrupted by thy depravation, or by God's renovating grace restored. As it is marred by thee, even natural truths are too high for it; as it is renewed by God, it can apprehend and embrace supernatural verities.

It is regenerate reason that I shall ever follow; and that will teach me to subscribe to all those truths which the unerring Spirit of the holy God hath revealed in his sacred word, however contrary to the ratiocination of flesh and blood. Only this is the right reason, which is illuminated by God's Spirit, and willingly subjected to faith; which represents to me those things which thou suggestest to me for unreasonable and impossible, as not feasible only, but most certain. That in one Deity there are three most glorious Persons, distinguished in their subsistences, not divided in their substance; that in one person of Christ the mediator there are two natures, divine and human, not converted into each other, not confounded each with other; that the Creator of all things should become a creature; that a creature should be the mother of him that is her God; however they be points which carnal reason cannot put over, yet they are such as reason illuminate and regenerate can both easily and most comfortably digest: *Great is the mystery of godliness; God manifested in the flesh,* 1 Tim. iii. 16. What mystery were there in godliness, if the deepest secrets of religion did lie open to the common apprehension of nature?

My Saviour, who is truth itself, hath told me, that *no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him,* Matt. xi. 27; and with the same breath gives thanks to his heavenly Father, that he hath *hid these things from the wise and prudent,* who were most likely, if reason might be the meet judge of spiritual matters, to attain the perfect knowledge of them, and hath *revealed them to babes,* ver. 25.

It is therefore God's revelation, not the ratiocination of man, that must give us light into these divine mysteries. Were it a matter of human disquisition, why did not those sages of nature, the learned philosophers of former times, reach unto it? But now a more learned man than they, the great doctor of the

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Gentiles, tells us, that *the gospel and preaching of Jesus Christ yields forth the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest by the scriptures of the prophets, and according to the commandment of the everlasting God made known to all nations for the obedience of faith,* Rom. xvi. 25, 26. Lo! he saith not to the obedience of reason, but of faith; and that faith doth more transcend reason than reason doth sense.

Thou urgest me, therefore, to be a man; I profess myself to be a Christian man. It is reason that makes me a man; it is faith that makes me a Christian.

The wise and bountiful God hath vouchsafed to hold forth four several lights to men; all which move in four several orbs, one above another; the light of sense, the light of reason, the light of faith, the light of ecstatical or divine vision. And all of these are taken up with their own proper objects: sense is busied about these outward and material things: reason is confined to things intelligible: faith is employed in matters spiritual and supernatural: divine vision in objects celestial and infinitely glorious.

None of these can exceed their bounds, and extend to a sphere above their own. What can the brute creature, which is led by mere sense, do or apprehend in matters of understanding and discourse? What can mere man, who is led by reason, discern in spiritual and supernatural things? What can the Christian, who is led by faith, which is *the evidence of things not seen,* attain unto in the clear vision of God and heavenly glory?

That God, who is a God of order, hath determined due limits to all our powers and faculties: thou, that art a spirit of confusion, goest about to disturb and disorder all those just ranks; labouring to jumble together those distinct orbs of reason and faith; and by the light of reason to extinguish the light of faith, and wouldest have us so to put on the man as that we should put off the Christian: but I have learned in this case to defy thee, grounding myself upon that word which is *mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ,* 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

I will therefore follow my sense so far as that will lead me; and not suffer myself to be beaten off from so sure a guide. Where my sense leaves me, I will betake myself to the direction

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of reason; and in all natural and moral things shall be willingly led by the guidance thereof. But when it comes to supernatural and divine truths, when I have the word of a God for my assurance, farewell reason, and welcome faith; as, when I shall have despatched this weary pilgrimage, and from a traveller shall come to be a comprehensor, farewell faith, and welcome vision.

In the mean time I shall labour, what I may, to understand all revealed truths; and where I cannot apprehend, I shall adore; humbly submitting to that word of the great and holy God: *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts,* Isa. lv. 8, 9.

IVth TEMPTATION:—"In how vain and causeless awe art thou held of dangers threatened to thy soul, and horrors of punishment after this life! whereas these are nothing but politic bugs, to affright simple and credulous men. Sin freely, man; and fear nothing. Take full scope to thy pleasures. After this life there is nothing; the soul dies together with the body, as in brute creatures; there is no further reckoning to be made:"—*Repelled.*

Deceitful spirit! How thou goest about to persuade me to that which thyself would be most loath should be true! For if the soul of man expired with the body, what subject shouldest thou have of that tyranny and torment which thou so much affectest? How willingly dost thou seem to fight against thyself, that thou mightest overcome me!

But this dart of thine is too blunt to pierce even a rational breast. Why dost thou not go about to persuade me that I am not a man, but a brute creature? Such I should be, if my soul were no other than theirs; for, as for bodily shape, there are of them not much unlike me. Why dost thou not persuade me that those brute creatures are men? if their souls were as ours, what were the difference? Canst thou hope I can so abdicate myself as to put myself into the rank of beasts? Canst thou think so to prevail with thy suggestions as to make reason itself turn irrational?

How palpably dost thou confound thyself in this very act of temptation! for if I had not a soul beyond the condition of brute creatures, how am I capable of sinning? Why dost thou persuade me to that whereof my nature, if but brutish, can have no capacity?

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Dost thou labour to prevail with thy temptations upon beasts? Dost thou importune their yieldance to sinful motions? If they had such a soul as mine, why should they not sin, as well as I? Why should they not be equally guilty? Contrarily, are those brute things capable of doing those works which may be pleasing unto God, the performance whereof thou so much enviest unto me? Can they desire and endeavour to be holy? Are they capable of making conscience of their ways?

Know then, O thou wicked spirit, that I know myself animated with another and more noble spirit than these other material creatures; and that I am sufficiently conscious of my own powers: that I have an inmate in my bosom of a divine original; which, though it takes part with the body while it is included in this case of clay, yet can and will, when it is freed from this earth, subsist alone, and be eternally happy in the present and perpetual vision of the God that made and redeemed it; and, in the mean time, exerciseth such faculties as well show whence it is derived, and far transcend the possibility of all bodily temperament. Can it not compare one thing with another? Can it not deduce one sequel from another? Can it not attain to the knowledge of the secrets of nature, of the perfection of arts? Can it not reach to the scanning of human plots, and the apprehension of divine mysteries? Yea, can it not judge of spirits? How should it do all this if it were not a spirit?

How evidently then doth the present estate of my soul convince thee of the future! All operations proceed from the forms of things, and every thing works as it is. Canst thou now deny that my soul, while it is within me, can and doth produce such actions as have no derivation from the body, no dependence on the body? for however, in matter of sensation, it sees by the eyes, and hears by the ears, and imagines by those phantasms that are represented unto it; yet when it comes to the higher works of intellectual elevations, how doth it leave the body below it! raising to itself such notions as wherein the body can challenge no interest: how can it now denude and abstract the thing conceived from all consideration of quantity, quality, place; and so work upon its own object as becomes an active spirit! Thou canst not be so impudent as to say the body doth these things by the soul; or that the soul doth them by the aid and concurrence of the body: and if the soul doth them alone while it is thus clogged, how much more operative shall it be when it is alone, separated

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from this earthen lump! And if the very voice of nature did not so sufficiently confute thee, that even thine own most eminent heathens have herein taken part against thee, living and dying strong assertors of the soul's immortality; how fully might thine accursed mouth be stopped by the most sure words of divine truth!

Yea, wert thou disposed to play at some smaller game, and by thy damnable clients to plead, not so much for the utter extinction as for the dormition of the soul, those oracles of God have enough to charm thee and them; and can with one blow cut the throat of both those blasphemies.

That penitent thief, whose soul thou madest full account of, when he was led to his execution, which yet my dying Saviour snatched out of thy hands, could hear comfortably from those blessed lips, *This day thou shalt be with me in paradise*, Luke xxiii. 43. Shall we think this malefactor in any other, in any better condition than the rest of God's saints? Doth not the Chosen Vessel tell us, that upon the dissolution of *our earthly house of this tabernacle, we have a building of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens?* 2 Cor. v. 1. Presently, therefore, after our flitting hence, we have a being, and that glorious: who can think of a being in heaven without a full sense of joy? Doth not our Saviour tell us, that the soul of poor Lazarus was immediately carried by angels into Abraham's bosom? Luke xvi. 22. The damned glutton knew so well that he was not laid there to sleep, that he sues to have him sent on the message of his refrigeration. Did not the beloved disciple, when he was in Patmos, upon the opening of the fifth seal, see *under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held?* Did he not hear them cry, *How long, Lord, holy and true?* Rev. vi. 9, 10. What! shall we think they cried in their sleep? Did he not see and hear the hundred forty-four thousand saints before the throne, harping and singing a new song to the praise of their God? Rev. xiv. 1, 3. Canst thou persuade us they made this heavenly music in their sleep? Doth he not tell us most plainly, from the mouth of one of the heavenly elders, that those which stood before the throne and the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, were they that *came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his*

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temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes? Rev. vii. 14–17. This service both day and night, and this leading forth, can suppose nothing less than a perpetual waking. Neither is this the happy condition of holy martyrs and confessors only, but is common to all the saints of God in whatever profession: *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord,* Rev. xiv. 13. How should the dead be blessed, if they did not live to know themselves blessed? what blessedness can be incident into those, that either are not at all, or are senseless? They rest, but sleep not: they rest from their labours, but not from the improvement of their glorified faculties: their works follow them; yea, and overtake them in heaven: to what purpose should their works follow them, if they lived not to enjoy the comfort of their works?

This is the estate of all good souls, in despite of all thine infernal powers. And what becomes of the wicked ones, thou too well knowest. Dissemble thou how thou wilt those torments, and hide the sight of that pit of horror from the eyes of thy sinful followers: he that *hath the keys of hell and of death,* (Rev. i. 18.) hath given us intimation enough; *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell,* Matt. x. 28. Neither is he more able out of his omnipotence than willing out of his justice, to execute this righteous vengeance on the impenitent and unbelievers: *Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil,* Rom. ii. 9.

In vain therefore dost thou seek to delude me with these pretences of indemnity and annihilation, since it cannot but stand with the mercy and justice of the Almighty, to dispose of every soul according to what they have been and what they have done: *To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,* Rom. ii. 7, 8. Shortly, after all thy devilish suggestions, on the one part, "The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them;" Wisdom iii. 1: on the other, *In flaming fire shall vengeance be taken*

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on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, 2 Thess. i. 8, 9.

Vth TEMPTATION.—"Put case that the soul after the departure from the body may live; but art thou so foolishly credulous as to believe that thy body, after it is mouldered into dust and resolved into all its elements, having passed through all the degrees of putrefaction and annihilation, shall at last return to itself again, and recover the former shape and substance? Dost thou not apprehend the impossibility of this so absurd assertion?"—*Repelled.*

No, tempter, it is true and holy faith which thou reproachest for fond credulity. Had I to do with no greater power than thine, or than any angel's in heaven, that is, merely finite; I might well be censured for too light belief in giving my assent to so difficult a truth: but now that I have to do with Omnipotence, it is no less than blasphemy in thee to talk of impossibility.

Do not thy very Mahometan vassals tell thee, that the same power which made man can as well restore him? and canst thou be other than apposed with the question of that Jew who asked, whether it were more possible to make a man's body of water or of earth? All things are alike easy to an infinite power. It is true, the resuscitation of the body from its dust is a supernatural work; yet such as whereof God hath been pleased to give us many images and prefigurations even in nature itself. In the face of the earth, do we not see the image of death in winter season; and in the spring, of a cheerful resurrection? Is not the life of all herbs, flowers, trees, buried in the earth during that whole dead season; and doth it not rise up again, with the approaching sun, into stems and branches; and send forth blossoms, leaves, fruits, in all beautiful variety? What need we any other than the apostle's instance? *Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it* pleaseth *him, and to every seed his own body,* 1 Cor. xv. 36, 37, 38. Lo, it must be rottenness and corruption that must make way for a flourishing increase. If I should come to a man that is ignorant of these fruitful productions of the earth, and, showing him a little naked grain, should tell him, "This which thou seest shall rot in the

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ground, and after that shall rise up a yard high into divers stalks, and every stalk shall bear an ear, and every ear shall yield twenty or thirty such grains as itself is:" or, showing him an acorn, should say, "This shall be buried in the earth, and after that shall rise up twenty or thirty foot high, and shall spread so far as to give comfortable shade to an hundred persons:" surely I should not win belief from him; yet our experience daily makes good these ordinary proofs of the wonderful providence of the Almighty. Or, should I show a man that is unacquainted with these great marvels of nature the small seed of the silkworm, lying scattered upon a paper, and seemingly dead all winter long, and should tell him, "These little atoms, so soon as the mulberry tree puts forth will yield a worm, which shall work itself into so rich a house as the great princes of the earth shall be glad to shelter themselves with, and after that shall turn to a large fly, and in that shape shall live to generate, and then speedily die:" I should seem to tell incredible things; yet this is so familiar to the experienced, that they cease to wonder at it. If from these vegetables we should cast our eyes upon some sensitive creatures, do we not see snails and flies, and some birds, lie as senseless and lifeless all the winter time, and yet when the spring comes they recover their wonted vivacity?

Besides these resemblances, have we not many clear instances and examples of our resurrection? Did not the touch of Elisha's bones raise up the partner of his grave? 2 Kings xiii. 21. Was not Lazarus called up out of his sepulchre after four days' possession, and many noisome degrees of rottenness? John xi. 39, 44. Were not the graves opened of many bodies of the saints which slept? Did not they arise and come out of their graves, after my Saviour's resurrection, and go into the holy city, and appear unto many? Matt. xxvii. 52, 53.

Besides examples, have we not an all-sufficient pledge of our certain rising again in the victorious resurrection of the Lord of life? Is not he our Head? are not we his members? Is not he the firstfruits of them that slept? 1 Cor. xv. 20. Did he not conquer death for us? 1 Cor. xv. 57. Can the Head be alive and glorious while the limbs do utterly perish in a final corruption? Certainly then, *if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him,* 1 Thess. iv. 14.

And if there were no more, that one argument wherewith my

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Saviour of old confounded thy Sadducees lives still to confound thee: *God is the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;* but *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living,* Matt. xxii. 32. The soul alone is not Abraham; whole Abraham lives not if the body were not to be joined to that soul.

Neither is it only certain that the resurrection will be, but also necessary that it must be; neither can the contrary consist with the infinite wisdom, goodness, justice, mercy of the Almighty.

For, first, how can it stand with the infinite goodness of the all-wise God, that the creature which he esteems dearest and loves best should be the most miserable of all other? Man is doubtless the best piece of his earthly workmanship: holy men are the best of men: were there no resurrection, surely no creature under heaven were so miserable as the holiest man. The basest of brute creatures find a kind of contentment in their being, and were it not for the tyranny of man would live and die at ease; and others of them, in what jollity and pleasure do they wear out their time! As for wicked men, who let the reins loose to their licentious appetite, how do they place their heaven here below, and glory in this, that they are yet somewhere happy! But for the mortified Christian, were it not for the comfort and amends of a resurrection, who can express the misery of his condition? He beats down his body in the willing exercises of sharp austerity, and, as he would use some sturdy slave, keeps it under, holding short the appetite oftentimes even from lawful desires; so as his whole life is little other than a perpetual penance. And as for his measure from others, how open doth he lie to the indignities, oppressions, persecutions of men! how is he trampled upon by scornful malignity! how is he reputed the offscouring of the world! how is he made a gazingstock of reproach to the world, to angels, and to men! Did there not therefore abide for them the recompense of a better estate in another world, the earth could afford no match to them in perfect wretchedness, 1 Cor. xv. 19: which how far it abhorreth from that goodness which made all the world for his elect, and so loves them that he gave his own Son for their redemption, let any enemy besides thine accursed self judge.

How can it stand with the infinite justice of God, who dispenseth due rewards to good and evil, to retribute them by halves? *The wages of sin is death: the gift of God is eternal life:* both these are given to the man, not to the soul. The body is copartner in

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the sin; it must therefore share in the torment; it must therefore be raised, that it may be punished. Eternity of joy or pain is awarded to the just or to the sinner: how can the body be capable of either, if it should finally perish in the dust?

How can it stand with the infinite mercy of God, who hath given his Son entirely for the ransom of the whole man, and by him salvation to every believer, that he should shrink in his gracious performances, making good only one part of his eternal word to the spiritual half, leaving the bodily part utterly forlorn to an absolute corruption?

Know then, O thou wicked one, that when all the rabble of thine Athenian scoffers and atheous Sadducees and carnal Epicureans shall have mispent all their spleen, my faith shall triumph over all their sensual reason, and shall afford me sound comfort against all the terrors of death, from the firm assurance of my resurrection; and shall confidently take up those precious words, which the mirror of patience wished to be written in a book and graven with an iron pen in the rock for ever, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God,* Job xix. 23—26: and my soul shall set up her rest in that triumphant conclusion of the blessed apostle: *This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; the strength of sin is the law: but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ,* 1 Cor. xv. 53—57.

VIth Temptation.—"If the soul must live, and the body shall rise, yet what needest thou to affright thyself with the terrors of an universal judgment? Credulous soul! when shall these things be? Thou talkest of an awful Judge; but where is the promise of his coming? These sixteen hundred years hath he been looked for, and yet he is not come; and when will he?"—*Repelled.*

Thy damned *scoffers* were betimes foreseen to move this question, even by that blessed apostle whose eyes saw his Saviour ascending up to his glory, 2 Pet. iii. 3: and who then heard the

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angel say, *Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven*, Acts i. 11. What dost thou and they but make good that sacred truth which was delivered before so many hundred generations?

Dissemble how thou wilt, that there shall be a general assize of the world thou knowest, and tremblest to know. What other couldest thou mean, when thou askedst my Saviour that question of horror, *Art thou come to torment us before the time?* Matt. viii. 29. That time thou knowest to be *the day in which God will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead*, Acts xvii. 31.

How clear a testation have the inspired prophets of God given of old to this truth! The ancientest prophet that ever was, Enoch, the seventh from Adam, in the time of the old world, foretells of this dreadful day: *Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him*, Jude 14, 15.

From the old world is this verity deduced to the new, and through the succession of those holy seers derived to the blessed apostles, and from them to the present generation.

Yea, the sacred mouth of Him who shall come down and sit as Judge in this awful tribunal hath fully laid forth, not the truth only, but the manner of this universal judicature; *The Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him: then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep*, Matt. xxv. 31, 32.

And if this most sure word of the prophets, apostles, yea, and of the eternal Son of God, be not enough conviction to thee, yet to my soul they are an abundant confirmation of this main point of my Christian faith, that from heaven he "shall come to judge both the quick and the dead."

Indeed, thus it must be. How many condemned innocents have, in the bitterness of their souls, appealed from that unrighteous bar of men to the supreme Judge that shall come! Those appeals are

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entered in heaven, and sued out; how can it stand with divine justice, that they should not have a day of hearing?

As for mean oppressors, there are good laws to meet with them, and there are higher than the highest to give life of execution to those laws; but if the greatest among men offend, if there were not an higher than they, what right would at last be done? those that have the most power and will to do the greatest mischief would escape the fairest. And though there be a privy sessions in heaven upon every guilty soul immediately upon the dissolution, yet the same justice, which will not admit public offences to be passed over with a private satisfaction, thinks fit to exhibit a public declaration of his righteous vengeance upon notorious sinners before men and angels; so as those very bodies which have been engaged in their wickedness shall be, in the view of the whole world, sent down to take part of their torment: and, indeed, wherefore should those bodies be raised, if not with the intent of a further disposition either to joy or pain? Contrarily, how can it consist with the praise of that infinite justice, that those poor saints of his which have been vilified and condemned at every bar, persecuted, *afflicted, tormented,* Heb. xi. 37, and have passed through all manner of painful and ignominious deaths, should not at the last be gloriously righted in the face of their cruel enemies? *Surely,* saith the apostle, *it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,* 2 Thess. i. 6, 7.

What is it, O thou wicked spirit, whereto thou art *reserved in chains of darkness?* is it not *the judgment of the great day?* Jude 6. What is it whereto the manifestation of all hidden truths, and the accomplishment of all God's gracious promises, are referred? is it not the great day of the Lord? Shall the all-wise and righteous Arbiter of the world decree and reverse? Hath he not from eternity determined and set this day, wherein *we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or evil?* 2 Cor. v. 10.

That there is, therefore, such a day of the Lord, *in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat: the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up: wherein the Lord himself shall*

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descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, 2 Pet. iii. 10; 1 Thess. iv. 16, is no less certain than that there is an heaven from whence he shall descend.

All thy cavil is concerning the time. Thou and thine are ready to say, with the evil servant in the gospel, *My master defers his coming.*

And was not this wicked suggestion of thine foretold many hundred years ago by the prime apostle, and by the same pen answered? Hath he not told thee, that our computations of time are nothing to the Infinite? *that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day?* Hath he not told us, that this misconstrued slackness is in man's vain opinion, not in God's performance? 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9. He is slack to man that comes not when he is looked for; he is really slack that comes not when he hath appointed to come. Had the Lord broken the day which he hath set in his everlasting counsel, thou mightest have some pretence to cavil at his delay; but now that he only overstays the time of our misgrounded expectation, he doth not slacken his pace, but correct our error.

It is true, that Christians began to look for their Saviour betimes, insomuch as the blessed apostles were fain to persuade their eyes not to make such haste; putting them in mind of those great occurrences of remarkable change that must befall the Church of God, in a general apostasy and the revelation of the great antichrist, 2 Thess. ii. 3, before that great day of his appearance. And the prime apostle sends them to the last days (which are ours) for those scoffers which shall say, *Where is the promise of his coming?* 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

If they looked for him too soon, we cannot expect him too late. He that is *Amen* will be sure to be within his own time; when that comes, *he that should come will come, and not tarry.*

In the mean while, not only in the just observation of his own eternal decree, but in much mercy, doth he prolong his return. Mercy to his elect, whose conversion he waits for with infinite patience: it is for their sake that the world stands: the angel that was sent to destroy Sodom could tell Lot, that he could do nothing till that righteous man were removed; no sooner was Lot entered into Zoar than Sodom is on a flame, Gen. xix. 22, 24. Mercy, even to the wicked, that they may have ample leisure of repentance. Neither is it any small respect that the wise and

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holy God hath to the exercise of the faith and hope and patience of his dear servants upon earth: faith in his promises; hope of his performances; and patience under his delays; whereof there could be no use in a speedy retribution.

In vain, therefore, dost thou, who fearest this glorious Judge will come too soon, go about to persuade me that he will not come at all. I believe and know by all the foregoing signs of his appearance, that he is now even at the threshold. Lo, he cometh, he cometh, for the consummation of thy torment and my joy. I expect him, as my Saviour: tremble thou at him, as thy Judge, who shall fully repay to thee all those blasphemies which thine accursed mouth hath dared to utter against him.

VIIth TEMPTATION:—"If there must be a resurrection and a judgment, yet God is not so rigid an exactor as to call thee to account for every petty sin. Those great sessions are for heinous malefactors: God is too merciful to condemn thee for small offences: be not thou too rigorous to thyself, in denying to thyself the pleasure of some harmless sins:"—*Repelled.*

False tempter! there is not the least of those harmless sins which thou wilt not be ready to aggravate against me one day, before the dreadful tribunal of that infinite Justice. Those that are now small will be then heinous, and hardly capable of remission.

Thy suggestions are no meet measures of the degrees of sin.

It is true, that there are some sins more grievous than others. There are faults: there are crimes: there are flagitious wickednesses. If some offences be foul, others are horrible, and some others irremissible. But that holy God, against whose only Majesty sin can be committed, hath taught me to call no sin small: the violation of that law, which is the rule of good, cannot but be evil; and betwixt good and evil there can be no less than an infinite disproportion.

It is no small proof of thy cunning, that thou hast suborned some of thy religious panders to proclaim some sins venial: and such as, in their very nature, merit pardon. Neither thou nor they shall be casuists for me, who have heard my God say, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them*, Gal. iii. 10; Deut. xxvii. 26.

Sin must be greater or less according to the value of the command against which it is committed. There is, as my Saviour

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hath rated it, *a least commandment*, Matt. v. 19: and there are more points than one in that *least command;* now the Spirit of Truth hath told me, that *whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all*, James ii. 10; and shall he that is guilty of the breach of the whole law escape with such ease?

I am sure a greater saint than I can ever hope to be hath said, *If I sin, thou markest me, and wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity*, Job x. 14; and old Eli, as indulgent as he was to his wicked sons, could tell them, *If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?* 1 Sam. ii. 25.

"What need is there," thou sayest, "of any entreaty? God's mercy is such, that he will pardon thy sins unasked: neither will he ever stick at small faults."

Malignant spirit! how fain wouldst thou have God's mercy and justice clash together! but thou shalt as soon wind thyself out of the power of that justice, and put thyself into the capacity of that mercy, as thou shalt set the least jar between that infinite justice and mercy.

It is true, it were wide with my soul, if there were any limits to that mercy. That mercy can do any thing but be unjust. It can forgive a sinner; it cannot encourage him: forgive him, upon his penitence, when he hath sinned: not encourage him in his resolution to sin; *If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared*, Ps. cxxx. 3, 4.

I know, therefore, whither to have my recourse when I have offended my God, even to that throne of grace where there is *plenteous redemption*, free and full remission. I hear the heavenly voice of him that saith, *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins*, Isa. xliii. 25; but I dare not offend, because his grace aboundeth. Justly doth the Psalmist make the use and effect of his mercy to be our fear; we must fear him for his mercies, and for his judgments love him. So far am I from giving myself leave to sin, because I have to do with a merciful God, as that his judgments have not so much power to drive me as his mercies have to draw me from my dearest sins.

As, therefore, my greatest sins are not too big for his mercy to remit, so my least sins are great enough to deserve his eternal

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displeasure. He that shall come to be Judge at those great assizes hath told us, that even *of every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account*, Matt. xii. 36. What can be slighter than the wind of our words? and what words more harmless than those which have no evil quality in them, though no good? such are our idle words: yet even those may not pass without an account. And if our thoughts be yet less than they, even those must so try us, as either to accuse or excuse us; and, if evil, may condemn us, Rom. ii. 15; Matt. xv. 19.

Think not, therefore, to draw me into sin, because it is little; *The wages of sin is death:* here is no stint of quantities. If sin be the work, death is the wages. Persuade me now, if thou canst, that there is a little death for a little sin: persuade me, that there is a lesser infiniteness, and a shorter eternity; till the great Judge of the world reverse his most just sentence, I shall look upon every sin as my death, and hate thee for the cause of both.

But as thy suggestion shall never move me to take liberty to myself of yielding to the smallest sin, so the greatness of my most heinous sin shall not daunt me while I rely upon an infinite mercy. Even my bloodiest sins are expiated by the blood of my Saviour. That, my all-sufficient Surety, hath cleared all my scores in heaven. In him I stand fully discharged of all my debts; and shall, after all thy wicked temptations, hold resolute, as not to commit the least sin, so not fear the greatest.

VIIIth Temptation:—"What a vain imagination is this wherewith thou pleasest thyself, that thy sins are discharged in another man's person; that another's righteousness should be thine; that thine offences should be satisfied by another's punishment! Tush, they abuse thee, that persuade thee God is angry with mankind, which he loves and favours; or that his anger is appeased by the bloody satisfaction of a Saviour; that thou standest acquitted in heaven by that which another hath done and suffered. These are fancies not fit to find place in the heads of wise men:"—*Repelled.*

Nay, rather, these are blasphemies, not fit to fall from any but a malignant devil. What is this but to flatter man, that thou mayest slander God?

Is not the anger of a just God deservedly kindled against man for sin? Do not *our iniquities separate between us and our God?* Do not *our sins hide his face from us, that he will not hear?* Isa. lix. 2. Are we not *all by nature the children of*

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wrath? Eph. ii. 3. Doth not *the wrath of God come* for sin *upon the children of disobedience?* Eph. v. 6. Doth not every willing sinner, *after his hardness and impenitent heart, treasure up unto himself,* lest he should not have enough, *wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the just judgment of God,* Rom. ii. 5.

Why do not thy Socinian clients go about to persuade us as well, that God is not angry with thee, though he torment thee perpetually, and hold thee *in everlasting chains under darkness?* Jude 6. What proofs can we have of anger but the effects of displeasure? was it not from hence that man was driven out of paradise? was it not from hence that both he, and we in him, were adjudged to death? as it is written, *By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men; for that all men have sinned,* Rom. v. 12; yea, not only to a temporal death, but *by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation,* Rom. v. 18.

Thou, who art the dreadful executioner, knowest too well who it is that had *the power of death* over those who, *through the fear of death, were all their lives long subject unto bondage,* Heb. ii. 14, 15. Under this woful captivity did we lie, *sold under sin,* vassals to it, and death, and thee, Rom. vii. 14; vi. 16, till that *one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus,* was pleased to *give himself a ransom for all, that he might redeem us from all iniquity;* who *by his own blood entered in once into the holy place, making an eternal redemption for us,* 1 Tim. ii. 5; Tit. ii. 14; Heb. ix. 12.

Lo, it is not doctrine and example, it is no less than blood, the blood of the Son of God, shed for our redemption, that renders him a perfect Mediator, and *cleanseth us from all sin,* Eph. i. 7; 1 John i. 7. *He hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour,* Eph. v. 2. *He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, from the power of darkness, and hath reconciled us in the body of his flesh through death, to present us holy, unblameable, and unreproveable in his sight,* Gal. iii. 13; Col. i. 13, 22. He it is that *bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness,* 1 Pet. ii. 24.

So abundant and clear testimony hath God been pleased to give to the infinite merit and efficacy of the bloody satisfaction of his Son Jesus made for us, that wert thou not as unmeasur-

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ably impudent as malicious, thou couldst not endeavour to outface so manifest a truth.

Think not to beat me off from this sure and saving hold by suggesting the improbability of another's satisfaction and obedience becoming mine. What is more familiar than this? Our sins are *debts;* so my Saviour hath styled them, Matt. vi. 12. How common a thing is it for debts to be set over to another's hand! how ordinary for a bond to be discharged by the surety! If the debt then be paid for me, and that payment accepted of the creditor as mine, how fully am I acquitted!

Indeed, thou dost no other than slander our title. The righteousness whereby we stand just before our God is not merely another's; it is, by application, ours; it is Christ's, and Christ is ours. He is our Head: we, as members, are united to him; and by virtue of this blessed union partake of his perfect obedience and satisfaction. It is true, were we strangers to a Saviour, his righteousness could have no relation to us; but now that we are incorporated into him by a lively faith, his graces, his merits are so ours, that all thy malice cannot sever them. I, even I, who sinned in the first Adam, have satisfied in the second. The first Adam's sin was mine; the second Adam was *made sin* for me, 2 Cor. v. 21. I made myself sinful in the first Adam, and in myself: my *Christ is made to* me *of God righteousness and redemption*, 1 Cor. i. 30. The curse was my inheritance: *Christ hath redeemed me from the curse of the law, being made a curse for* me, *that* I *might be made the righteousness of God in him*, Gal. iii. 13; 2 Cor. v. 21. It is thy deep envy thus to grudge unto man the mercy of that redemption which was not extended to thyself; but in despite of all thy snarling and repining, we are safe: *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ*, Rom. v. 1.

IXth Temptation:—"How confidently thou buildest upon a promise; and if thou have but a word for it, makest thyself sure of any blessing! whereas thou mayest know, that many of those promises which thou accountest sacred and divine have shrunk in the performance. How hath God promised deliverance to those that trust in him! yet how many of his faithfullest servants have miscarried! What liberal promises hath he made of provision for those that wait upon him! yet how many of them have miserably perished in want!"—*Repelled.*

Blasphemous spirit! that which is thine own guise thou art

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ever apt to impute unto the Holy One of Israel. It is indeed thy manner to draw on thy clients with golden promises of life, wealth, honour; and to say, as once to my Saviour, *All these will I give thee,* when thou neither meanest, nor canst give any thing, but misery and torment.

As for my God, whom thou wickedly slanderest, his just title is, *Holy and true,* Rev. vi. 10; his promises are *Amen,* as himself, 2 Cor. i. 20. Thy Balaam could let fall so much truth, that *God is not a man, that he should lie; nor the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?* Numb. xxiii. 19.

Cast thine eyes back upon his dealings with his Israel; a people unthankful enough: and deny, if thou canst, how punctual he was in all his proceedings with them. Hear old Joshua, now towards his parting, profess, *Behold, this day I am going the way of all flesh; and ye know in your hearts, and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you: all are come to pass unto you; and not one thing hath failed thereof,* Joshua xxiii. 14. Hear the same truth attested many ages after by the wisest king: *Blessed be the Lord,* saith he, *that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant,* 1 Kings viii. 56.

And lest thou shouldest cavil, that perhaps God takes greater liberty to himself in matter of his promises under the Gospel than he formerly did under the Law; let me challenge thy malice to instance in any one absolute promise which God hath made since the beginning of the world unto this day, which he hath failed to perform.

It is not, I grant, uneasy to name divers conditionate engagements, both of favours and judgments, wherein God hath been pleased to vary from his former intimations; and such alteration doth full well consist with the infinite wisdom, mercy, and justice of the Almighty; for where the condition required is not performed by man, how just is it with God either to withhold a favour or to inflict a judgment! or, where he sees that an outward blessing promised (such a disposition of the soul as it may meet withal) may turn to our prejudice, and to our spiritual loss, how is it other than mercy to withdraw it, and instead thereof to gratify us with a greater blessing undesired?

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In all which, even our own reason is able to justify the Almighty; for can we think God should be so obliged to us as to force favours upon us when we will needs render ourselves uncapable of them; or so tied up to the punctuality of a promise, as that he may not exchange it for a better?

The former was Eli's case, who received this message from the man of God, sent to him for that purpose: *The Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father should walk before me for ever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed,* 1 Sam. ii. 30. God meant the honour of the priesthood to the family of Eli; but what! was it in so absolute terms, that however they dishonoured God, yet God was bound to honour them? All these promises of outward favours do never other than suppose an answerable capacity in the receiver: like as the menaces of judgment, however they sound, do still intend the favourable exception of a timely prevention by a serious repentance.

And though there be no express mention of such condition in the promises and threatenings of the Almighty; yet it is enough that he hath once for all made known his holy intentions to this purpose by his prophet: *At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build, and to plant it: if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them,* Jer. xviii. 7—10.

The message of Hezekiah's death and Nineveh's destruction was, in the letter, absolute; but, in the sense and intention, conditionate.

With such holy and just reservations are all the promises and threats of the Almighty in these temporal regards: while they alter therefore, he changeth not. But for his spiritual engagements, that word of his shall stand everlastingly, *I will not suffer my faithfulness to fail: my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my mouth,* Ps. lxxxix. 33, 34.

Indeed, this is the temptation wherewith thou hast formerly set some prime saints of God very hard.

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How doth the holy Psalmist hereupon break out into a dangerous passion! *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he shut up his tender mercies in* displeasure? Ps. lxxvii. 7—9. Lo, the man was even falling, yet happily recovers his feet: *And I said, This is mine infirmity,* ver. 10: thine infirmity, sure enough, O Asaph, to make question of the veracity and unfailableness of the sure mercies and promises of the God of truth. Well was it for thee that thy God, not taking advantage of thy weakness, puts forth his gracious hand, and stays thee with the seasonable consideration *of the years of the right hand of the Most High;* with the remembrance *of the works of the Lord, and of his wonders of old,* verses 10, 11. These were enough to teach thee the omnipotent power, the never-failing mercy of thy Maker and Redeemer.

In no other plight, through the impetuousness of this temptation, was the man after God's own heart; while he cried out, *I was greatly afflicted; I said in my haste, All men are liars,* Ps. cxvi. 10, 11. The men that he misdoubted were surely no other than God's prophets, which had foretold him his future prosperity, and peaceable settlement in the throne; these, upon the cross occurrences he met with, is he ready to censure as liars; and through their sides what doth he but strike at him that sent them? But the word was not spoke in more haste than it was retracted: *I believed; therefore I spake,* ver. 10; and the sense of mercy doth so overtake the sense of his sufferings, that now he takes more care what to retribute to God for his bounty than he did before how to receive it, and pitches himself upon that firm ground of all comfort, *O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid; thou hast loosed my bonds,* ver. 16. Here shall I stay my soul against all thy suggestions of distrust, O thou malicious enemy of mankind; building myself upon that steady rock of Israel, whose word is, *I am Jehovah: I change not.*

Thou tellest me of deliverances promised, yet ending in utter miscarriages; of provisions vanished into want; why dost thou not tell me that even good men die?

These promises of earthly favours to the godly declare to us the ordinary course that God pleaseth to hold in the dispensation of his blessings; which he so ordereth, as that generally they are

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the lot of his faithful ones, for the encouragement and reward of their services; and, contrarily, his judgments befall his enemies, in part of payment. But yet the great God, who is a most free agent, holds fit to leave himself at such liberty, as that sometimes, for his own most holy purposes, he may change the scene; which yet he never doth but to the advantage of his own; so as the oppressions and wrongs which are done to them turn favours.

The hermit in the story could thank the thief that robbed him of his provision, for that he helped him so much the sooner to his journey's end; and indeed, if being stripped of our earthly goods we be stored with spiritual riches; if while the outward man perisheth, the inward man be renewed in us; if for a little bootless honour here we be advanced to an immortal glory; if we have exchanged a short and miserable life for a life eternally blessed; finally, if we lose earth and win heaven, what cause have we to be other than thankful?

Whereto we have reason to add, that in all these gracious promises of temporal mercies there is ever to be understood the exception of expedient castigation, and the meet portage of the cross; which were it not to be supplied, God's children should want one of the greatest proofs of his fatherly love towards them, which they can read even written in their own blood, and can bless God in killing them for a present blessedness.

So as, after all thy malice, God's promises are holy, his performances certain, his judgments just, his servants happy.

Xth TEMPTATION :—"Thou art more nice than needs. Your preachers are too straitlaced in their opinions, and make the way to heaven narrower than God ever meant it. Tush, man, thou mayest be saved in any religion. Is it likely that God will be so cruel as to cast away all the world of men in the several varieties of their professions, and save only one poor handful of reformed Christians? Away with these scruples: a general belief, and a good meaning, will serve to bring thee to heaven, without these busy disquisitions of the Articles of Faith:"—*Repelled.*

It is not for good that thou makest such liberal tenders to my soul. Thou well knowest how ready man's nature is to lay hold on any just liberty that may be allowed him, and how repiningly it stoops to a restraint.

But this, which thou craftily suggestest to me, wicked spirit,

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is not liberty, it is licentiousness. Thou tellest me the way to heaven is as wide as the world; but the Spirit of truth hath taught me, that *strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it*, Matt. vii. 14.

I know there is but one truth, and one life, and one way to that life; and I know who it was that said, *I am the way, the truth, and the life.* He who is one of these is all. My Saviour, who is life, the end of that way, is likewise the way that leads unto that end: neither is there any way to heaven but he: all that is besides him is by-paths and error. And if any teacher shall enlarge or straiten this way Christ, let him be accursed. And if any teacher shall presume to chalk out any other way than Christ, let him be accursed.

Tell not me, therefore, of the multitudes of men and varieties of religions that there are in the world. If there were as many worlds as men, and every of those men in those worlds were severed in religion, yet, I tell thee, there is but one heaven, and but one gate to that heaven, and but one way to that gate, and that one gate and way is Christ; without whom, therefore, there can be no entrance.

It is thy blasphemy to charge cruelty upon God if he do not (that whereof thou wouldest most complain as the greatest loser) set heaven open on all sides to whatsoever comers. Even that God and Saviour which possesseth and disposeth it hath told us of a strait gate, and a narrow way, and few passengers. In vain dost thou move me to affect to be more charitable than my Redeemer. He best knows what he hath to do with that mankind for whom he hath paid so dear a price.

Yet, to stop thy wicked mouth, that way which, in comparison of the broad world, is narrow, in itself hath a comfortable latitude. Christ extendeth himself largely to a world of believers. This way lies open to all: no nation, no person under heaven is excluded from walking in it; yea, all are invited by the voice of the gospel to tread in it: and whosoever walks in it with a right foot is accepted to salvation.

How far it may please my Saviour to communicate himself to men in an implicit way of belief, and what place those general and involved apprehensions of the Redeemer may find for mercy at the hands of God, he only knows that shall judge: this I am sure of, that without this Saviour there can be no salvation: *that*

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in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him, Acts x. 35: *that he that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son hath not life,* 1 John v. 12.

As therefore we do justly abhor that wide scope of all religions which thou suggestest, so we do willingly admit a large scope in one true religion; so large as the author of it hath thought good to allow. For we have not to do with a God that stands upon curiosities of belief, or that upon pain of damnation requires of every believer an exquisite perfection of judgment concerning every capillary vein of theological truth: it is enough for him if we be right for the main substance of the body. He doth not call rigorously for every stone in the battlements; it sufficeth for the capacity of our salvation if the foundation be held entire.

It is thy slander therefore, that we confine truth and blessedness to a corner of reformed Christians: no, we seek and find it every where, where God hath a Church; and God's Church we know to be universal. Let them be Abassines, Copts, Armenians, Georgians, Jacobites, or whatever names either slander or distinction hath put upon them, if they hold the foundation firm, howsoever disgracefully built upon with *wood, hay, stubble,* we hold them Christ's, we hold them ours, 1 Cor. iii. 12. Hence it is that the new Jerusalem is, for her beauty and uniformity, set forth with twelve precious gates, Rev. xxi. 12; though, for use and substance, one; for that from all coasts of heaven there is free access to the Church of Christ, and in him to life and glory.

He who is the Truth and the Life hath said, *This is eternal life, to know thee, and him whom thou hast sent,* John xvii. 3. This knowledge, which is our way to life, is not alike attained of all; some have greater light and deeper insight into it than others. That mercy, which accepts of the least degree of the true apprehension of Christ, hath not promised to dispense with the wilful neglect of those who might know him more clearly, more exactly. Let those careless souls, therefore, which stand indifferent betwixt life and death, upon thy persuasion, content themselves with good meanings and generalities of belief; but for me, I shall labour to furnish myself with all requisite truths, and, above all, shall aspire towards *the excellency of the knowledge of my Lord Jesus Christ; that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings,* Phil. iii. 8, 10.

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THE SECOND DECADE.

TEMPTATIONS OF DISCOURAGEMENT.

1st TEMPTATION.—"Were it for some few sins of ignorance or infirmity, thou mightest hope to find place for mercy; but thy sins are, as for multitude innumerable, so for quality heinous, presumptuous, unpardonable: with what face canst thou look up to heaven and expect remission from a just God."—*Repelled.*

EVEN with the face of an humble penitent, justly confounded in himself, in the sense of his own vileness, but awfully confident in a promised mercy.

Malicious tempter, how like thou art to thyself! When thou wouldest draw me on to my sins, then how small, slight, harmless, plausible they were! now thou hast fetched me in to the guilt of those foul offences, they are no less than deadly and irremissible.

May I but keep within the verge of mercy, thou canst not more aggravate my wickedness against me than I do against myself; thou canst not be more ready to accuse than I to judge and condemn myself. O me, the wretchedest of all creatures! How do I hate myself for mine abominable sins, done with so high a hand, against such a Majesty, after such light of knowledge, such enforcements of warning, such endearments of mercy, such reluctations of spirit, such checks of conscience! what less than hell have I deserved from that infinite Justice? Thou canst not write more bitter things against me than I can plead against my own soul.

But when thou hast cast up all thy venom, and when I have passed the heaviest sentence against myself, I, who am in myself utterly lost and forfeited to eternal death, in despite of the gates of hell shall live, and am safe in my almighty and ever-blessed Saviour, who hath conquered death and hell for me.

Set thou me against myself; I shall set my Saviour against thee. Urge thou my debts; I show his full acquittance. Sue thou my bonds; I shall exhibit them cancelled, and nailed to his cross. Press thou my horrible crimes; I plead a pardon sealed in heaven. Thou tellest me of the multitude and heinousness of my sins: I tell thee of an infinite mercy; and what are numbers and magnitudes to the Infinite? To an illimited power, what

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difference is there betwixt a mountain and an ant-heap, betwixt one and a million? were my sins a thousand times more and worse than they are, there is worth abundantly enough in every drop of that precious blood which was shed for my redemption to expiate them.

Know, O tempter, that I have to do with a mercy which can dye my scarlet sins white as snow, and make my crimson as wool, Isa. i. 18; whose grace is so boundless, that if thou thyself hadst upon thy fall been capable of repentance, thou hadst not everlastingly perished: *The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy. The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works*, Ps. cxlv. 8, 9. And if there be a sin of man unpardonable, it is not for the insufficiency of grace to forgive it, but for the incapacity of the subject that should receive remission.

Thou feelest, to thy pain and loss, wherefore it was that the eternal Son of God, *Jesus Christ, came into the world; even to save sinners!* 1 Tim. i. 15; and if my own heart shall conspire with thee to accuse me as the chief of those sinners, my repentance gives me so much the more claim and interest in his blessed redemption. Let me be the most laden with the chains of my captivity, so I may have the greatest share in that all-sufficient ransom.

And if thou, who art the true fiery serpent in this miserable wilderness, hast by sin stung my soul to death; let me, as I do with penitent and faithful eyes, but look up to that brazen serpent, which is lift up far above all heavens, thy poison cannot kill, cannot hurt me.

It is the word of eternal truth which cannot fail us, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*, 1 John i. 9. Lo here, not mercy only, but justice on my side. The Spirit of God saith not only, if we confess our sins, he is *merciful* to forgive our sins; as he elsewhere speaks by the pen of Solomon, Prov. xxviii. 13; but more, he is *faithful* and *just* to forgive our sins. Our weakness and ignorance is wont to fly from the justice of our God unto his mercy; what can we fear when his very justice yields remission? That justice relates to his gracious promise of pardon to the penitent: while I do truly repent therefore, his very justice necessarily infers mercy, and that mercy forgiveness. Think not, therefore, O thou malicious spirit, to affright me with the

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mention of Divine Justice. Woe were me, if God were not as just as merciful; yea, if he were not therefore merciful because he is just; merciful, in giving me repentance; just, in vouchsafing me the promised mercy and forgiveness upon the repentance which he hath given me.

After all thy heinous exaggerations of my guilt, it is not the quality of the sin, but the disposition of the sinner, that damns the soul. If we compare the offensive acts of a David and a Saul, it is not easy to judge whether were more foul. Thou which stirredst them up both to those odious sins, madest account of an equal advantage against both; but thine aim failed thee: the humble and true penitence of the one saved him out of thy hands; the obduredness and falseheartedness of the other gave him up as a prey to thy malice.

It is enough for me, that though I had not the grace to avoid my sins, yet I have the grace to hate and bewail them. That good Spirit, which thought not good to restrain me from sinning, hath been graciously pleased to humble me for sinning.

Yea, such is the infinite goodness of my God to my poor soul, that those sins which thou hast drawn me into, with an intent of my utmost prejudice and damnation, are happily turned, through his grace, unto my greatest advantage: for had it not been for these my sinful miscarriages, had I ever attained to so clear a sight of my own frailty and wretchedness? so deep a contrition of soul? so real experience of temptation? so hearty a detestation of sin? such tenderness of heart? such awe of offending? so fervent zeal of obedience? so sweet a sense of mercy? so thankful a recognition of deliverance?

What hast thou now gained, O thou wicked spirit, by thy prevalent temptations? What trophies hast thou cause to erect for thy victory and my foil? Couldest thou have won me to a trade of sinning, to a resolution in evil, to a pleasure as in the commission so in the memory of my sin, to a glorying in wickedness, and then mightest have taken the advantage of snatching me away in a state of unrepentance, thou mightest have had just cause to triumph in thy prey; but now that it hath pleased my God to show me so much mercy as to check me in my evil way, to work in me an abhorring of my sin and of myself for it, and to pull me out of thy clutches by a true and seasonable repentance, thou hast lost a soul, and I have found a Saviour. Thou mayest upbraid me with the foulness of my sins, I shall bless God for their improvement.

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IInd TEMPTATION.—"Alas, poor man, how willing thou art to make thyself believe that thou hast truly repented: whereas this is nothing but some dump of melancholy, or some relenting of nature, after too much expense of spirits; or some irksome discontentment after a satiety and weariness of pleasure; or some slavish shrinking in upon the expectation of a lash: true penitence is a spiritual business; an effect of that grace which was never incident into thy bosom."—*Repelled.*

Malicious tempter, it is my no small happiness that thou art not admitted to keep the key of my heart, or to look into my breast, to see what is in my bosom; and therefore thou canst not, out of knowledge, pass any censure of my inward dispositions, only wilt be sure to suggest the worst; which the falser it is the better doth it become the father of lies. But that good Spirit, which hath wrought true repentance in my heart, witnesseth, together with my heart, the truth of my repentance.

Canst thou hope to persuade me that I do belie or misknow my own grief? Do not I feel this heart of mine bleed with a true inward remorse for my sins? Have I not poured out many hearty sighs and tears for mine offences? Do I not ever look back upon them with a vehement loathing and detestation? Have I not, with much anguish of soul, confessed them before the face of that God whom I have provoked?

Think not now to choke me with a Cain or Saul or Judas, which did more and repented not; and to fasten upon me a *worldly sorrow that worketh death:* no, wicked one, after all thy depravations, this grief of mine looks with a far other face than theirs, and is no other than a *godly sorrow, working repentance to salvation, not to be repented of,* 2 Cor. vii. 10. Theirs was out of the horror of punishment; mine, out of the sense of displeasure: theirs, for the doom and execution of a severe judge; mine, for the frowns of an offended Father: theirs, attended with a woful despair; mine, with a weeping confidence: theirs, a preface to hell; mine, an introduction to salvation.

And since thou wilt needs disparage and miscall this godly disposition of mine, lo, I challenge this envy of thine to call it to the test, and to examine it thoroughly, whether it agree not with those unfailing rules of the symptoms and effects of the sorrow which is according to God, 2 Cor. vii. 11:—Hath not here been a true *carefulness;* as to be freed and acquitted from the present guilt of my sin, so to keep my soul unspotted for the future; both

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to work my peace with my God, and to continue it? Hath not my heart earnestly laboured to *clear* itself before God; not with shuffling excuses and flattering mitigations, but by humble and sincere confessions of my own vileness? Hath not my breast swelled up with an angry *indignation* at my sinful miscarriages? have I not seriously rated myself for giving way to thy wicked temptations? Have I not *trembled*, not only at the apprehension of my own danger by sin, but at the very suggestion of the like offence? have I not been kept in awe with the jealous fears of my miserable frailties, lest I should be again ensnared in thy mischievous gins? Have I not felt in myself a *fervent desire* above all things to stand right in the recovered favour of my God, and to be strengthened in the inner man with a further increase of grace, for the preventing of future sins, and giving more glory to my God and Saviour? Hath not my heart within me burned with so much more *zeal* to the honour and service of that Majesty which I have offended, as I have more dishonoured him by my offence? hath it not been inflamed with just displeasure at myself, and all the instruments and means of my misleading? Lastly, have I not *fallen foul upon myself* for so easy a seduction? have I not chastised myself with sharp reproofs? have I not held my appetite short; and, upon these very grounds, punished it with a denial of lawful contentments? have I not thereupon tasked myself with the harder duties of obedience? and do I not now resolve, and carefully endeavour, to walk conscionably in all the ways of God?

Malign therefore how thou wilt, my repentance stands firm against all thy detractions, and is not more impugned by thee on earth than it is accepted in heaven.

IIIrd TEMPTATION.—"Thou hast small reason to bear thyself upon thy repentance; it is too slight, seconded with too many relapses; too late to yield any true comfort to thy soul."—*Repelled.*

Nor thus can I be discouraged by thee, malicious spirit.

The mercy of my God hath not set any stint to the allowed measure of repentance. Where hath he ever said, "Thus far shall thy penitence come, else it shall not be accepted?" It is truth that he calls for, not measure. That happy thief, whom my dying Saviour rescued out of thy hands, gave no other proof of his repentance, but, *We are justly here, and receive the due reward of our deeds*, Luke xxiii. 41, yet was admitted to attend his Redeemer from his cross to his paradise. Neither do we hear

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any words from penitent David after his foul crimes, but *I have sinned*. Not that any true penitent can be afraid of too much compunction of heart, and is ready to dry up his tears too soon; rather pleasing himself with the continuance and pain of his own smart; but that our indulgent Father, who takes no pleasure in our misery, is apt to wipe away the tears from our eyes; contenting himself only with the sincereness, not the extremity of our contrition. Thy malice is altogether for extremes; either a wild security or an utter desperation: that holy and merciful Spirit, who is a professed lover of mankind, is ever for the mean; so hating our carelessness, that he will not suffer us to want the exercises of a due humiliation; so abhorring despair, that he abides not to have us driven to the brink of that fearful precipice. As for my repentance therefore, it is enough for me that it is sound and serious for the substance; yet withal, thanks be to that good Spirit that wrought it, it is graciously approvable even for the measure: I have heartily mourned for my sins, though I pined not away with sorrow; I have broken my sleep for them, though I have not watered my couch with my tears; and, next to thyself, I have hated them most: I have beaten my breast, though I have not rent my heart: and what would I not have done or given that I had not sinned? Tell not me that some worldly crosses have gone nearer to my heart than my sins, and that I have spent more tears upon the loss of a son than the displeasure of my heavenly Father: the Father of mercies will not measure our repentance by these crooked lines of thine: he knows the flesh and blood we are made of, and therefore expects not we should have so quick a sense of our spiritual as of our bodily affliction: it contents him that we set a valuation of his favour above all earthly things, and esteem his offence the greatest of all evils that can befall us: and of this judgment and affection, it is not in thy power to bereave my soul.

As for my relapses, I confess them with sorrow and shame. I know their danger; and, had I not to do with an infinite mercy, their deadliness. Yet, after all my confusion of face and thine enforcement of justice, my soul is safe; for upon those perilous recidivations, my hearty repentance hath made my peace. The longsuffering God, whom I have offended, hath set no limits to his remission.. After ten miraculous signs in Egypt, his Israel tempted him no less than ten times in the wilderness, Num. xiv. 22, yet his mercy forbore them, not rewarding their reiterated sin

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with deserved vengeance. Hath not that gracious Saviour of mankind charged us to forgive our offending brother no less than *seventy times seven times?* Matt. xviii. 22, and what proportion is there between our mercy and his? Couldest thou charge me with encouraging myself to continue my sin upon this presumption of pardon, thou hadst cause to boast of the advantage; but now that my remorse hath been sincere and my falls weak, my God will not withhold mercy from his penitent, that hath not only *confessed*, but *forsaken* his sin, Prov. xxviii. 13.

As for the late season of my repentance, I confess I have highly wronged and hazarded my soul in the delay of so often required and so often purposed a work, and given thee fair advantages against myself by so dangerous a neglect; but blessed be my God, that he suffered not these advantages to be taken. I had been utterly lost if thou hadst surprised me in my impenitence, but now I can look back upon my peril well passed, and defy thy malice. No time can be prejudicial to the King of heaven; no season can be any bar either to our conversion or his merciful acceptance. It is true, that lateness gives shrewd suspicions of the truth of repentance, but where our repentance is true it cannot come too late. Object this to some formal souls that, having lavished out the whole course of their lives in wilful sensuality and profaneness, think to make an abundant amends for all on their death-beds, with a fashionable *Lord, have mercy.* These, whom thou hast mocked and drawn on with a stupid security all their days, may well be upbraided by thee with the irrecoverable delay of what they have not grace to seek; but that soul which is truly touched with the sense of his sin, and in an humble contrition makes his address to God, and interposes Christ betwixt God and itself, is in vain scared with delay, and finds that his God makes no difference of hours. Do I not see the prodigal in the gospel, after he had run himself quite out of breath and means, yet at the last cast returning, and accepted? Luke xv. 14, 15, &c. I do not hear his father austerely say, "Nay, unthrift, hadst thou come while thou hadst some bags left I should have welcomed thy return, as an argument of some grace and love; but now that thou hast spent all, and necessity, not affection, drives thee home, keep off and starve:" but the good old man runs and meets him, and falls on his neck and kisses him, and calls for the best robe and the fatted calf. Thus, thus deals our heavenly Father with us wretched sinners: if, after all refuges

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vainly sought, and all gracious opportunities carelessly neglected, we shall yet have sincere recourse to his infinite mercy, the best things in heaven shall not be too good for us.

IVth TEMPTATION.—"Tush! what dost thou please thyself with these vain thoughts? If God cared for thee, couldest thou be thus miserable?"—*Repelled.*

Away, thou lying spirit; I am afflicted, but it is not in thy power to make me miserable.

And did I yet smart much more, wouldest thou persuade me to measure the favour of my God by these outward events? Hath not the Spirit of truth taught me that in these external matters *all things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath?* Eccl. ix. 2.

But if there were any judgment to be passed upon these grounds, the advantage is mine; I smart, yea I bleed under the hand of my heavenly Father: *Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth*, Heb. xii. 6. Lo, there cannot be so much pain in the stripes as there is comfort in the love of him that lays them on. He were not my Father, if he whipt me not. Truth hath said it, *If ye be without chastisements, ye are bastards, and not sons*, Heb. xii. 8. He cannot but love me while he is my Father; and let him fetch blood on me, so he love me. After all thy malice, let me be a bleeding son to such a Father, while thy base-born children enjoy their ease.

Impudent tempter, how canst thou from my sufferings argue God's disfavour, when thou knowest that he whom God loved best suffered most? The eternal Son of his love, that could truly say, *I and the Father are one*, endured more from the hand of that his heavenly Father than all the whole world of mankind was capable to suffer: *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisements of our peace were upon him. The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all*, Isa. liii. 4, 5, 6. What poor flea-bitings are these that I am afflicted with, in respect of those torments which the Son of God underwent for me! Thou, that sawest the bloody sweat of his agony, the cruel tortures of his crucifixion, the pangs of worse

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than death, the sense of his Father's wrath and our curse, dost thou move me, whom he hath bought with so dear a price, to murmur, and recoil upon Divine providence for a petty affliction?

Besides, this is the load which my blessed Saviour hath with his own hand laid upon my shoulders: *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me,* Luke ix. 23; Matt. xvi. 24; Mark viii. 34. Lo, every cross is not Christ's: each man hath a cross of his own; and this cross he may not think to tread upon, but he must take up; and not once perhaps in his life, but daily; and with that weight on his neck he must follow the Lord of life, not to his Tabor only, but to his Golgotha: and thus following him on earth, he shall surely overtake him in heaven; *for if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him,* 2 Tim. ii. 12.

It is still thy policy, O thou envious spirit, to fill mine eyes with the cross, and to represent nothing to my thoughts but the horror and pain of suffering, that so thou mayest drive me to a languishing dejectedness of spirit and despair of mercy; but my God hath raised and directed mine eyes to a better prospect, quite beyond thine, which is a crown of glory. I see that ready to be set upon my head, after my strife and victory, which were more than enough to make amends for an hell upon earth. In vain should I hope to obtain it without a conflict: how should I overcome if I strive not? these strugglings are the way to a conquest. After all these assaults the foil shall be thine, and mine shall be the glory and triumph. The God of truth hath said it, *Be faithful to the death, and I will give thee a crown of life,* Rev. ii. 10.

Thine advantage lies in the way, mine in the end. The way of affliction is rugged, deep, stiff, dangerous; the end is fair and green, and strewed with flowers: *No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby,* Heb. xii. 11.

What if I be in pain here for a while? *The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us,* Rom. viii. 18. It is thy maliciousness that would make the affliction of my body the bane of my soul; but if the fault be not mine, that which thou intendest for a poison shall prove a cordial: *Let patience have her perfect work,* James i. 4: and I am happy in my sufferings: *For our light*

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affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 2 Cor. iv. 17. Lo, it doth not only admit of glory, but works it for us; so as we are infinitely more beholden to our pain than to our ease, and have reason, not only to be well apaid, but to *rejoice in tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed,* Rom. v. 3—5. Tell me, if thou canst, which of those saints that are now shining bright in their heaven hath got thither unafflicted? How many of those blessed ones have endured more than my God will allow thee to inflict upon my weakness! some more, and some less sorrows; all some, yea many: so true is that word of the Chosen Vessel, *that through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God,* Acts xiv. 22.

By this then I see that I am in my right way to that blessedness I am travelling towards. Did I find myself in the smooth, pleasant, and flowery path of carnal ease and contentment, I should have just reason to think myself quite out of that happy road; now I know I am going directly towards my home, the abiding city which is above. So far therefore are my sufferings from arguing me miserable, that I could not be happy if I suffered not.

Vth TEMPTATION: — "Foolish man, how vainly dost thou flatter thyself in calling that a chastisement which God intends for a judgment, in mistaking that for a rod of fatherly correction which God lays on as a scourge of just anger and punishment!"— *Repelled.*

It is thy maliciousness, O thou wicked spirit, ever to misinterpret God's actions, and to slander the footsteps of the Almighty.

But, notwithstanding all thy mischievous suggestions, I can read mercy and favour in my affliction; neither shall it be in the power of thy temptation to put me out of this just construction of my sufferings.

For what? is it the measure of my smart that should argue God's displeasure? How many of God's darlings on earth have endured more! What sayest thou to the man, with whom the Almighty did once challenge and foil thee, the great pattern of patience? was not his calamity as much beyond mine as my graces are short of his? Dost thou not hear the man after God's own heart say, *Lord, remember David, and all his troubles?* Ps.

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CXXXII. 1. Dost thou not hear the Chosen Vessel, who was rapt up into the third heaven, complain, *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed?* 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9. *Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by my own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, &c.; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness?* 2 Cor. xi. 24—27. Yea, which was worse than all these, dost thou not hear him say, *There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me?* 2 Cor. xii. 7. Dost thou not too well know, for thou wert the main actor in those woful tragedies, what cruel torments the blessed martyrs of God in all ages have undergone for their holy profession? None upon earth ever found God's hand so heavy upon them: none upon earth were so dear to heaven.

The sharpness therefore of my pangs can be no proof of the displeasure of my God. Yea, contrarily, this visitation of mine, whatever thou suggestest, is in much love and mercy. Had my God let me loose to my own ways, and suffered me to run on carelessly in a course of sinning without check or control, this had been a manifest argument of an high and heinous displeasure: God is grievously angry when he punishes sinners with prosperity, for this shows them reserved to a fearful damnation; but whom he reclaims from evil by a severe correction, those he loves: there cannot be a greater favour than those saving stripes: *When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world,* 1 Cor. xi. 32.

Besides, the manner of the infliction speaks nothing but mercy; for what a gentle hand doth my God lay upon me! as if he said, "I must correct thee, but I will not hurt thee." What gracious respites are here! what favourable interspirations! as if God bade me to recollect myself, and invited me to meet him by a seasonable humiliation. This is not the fashion of anger and enmity, which, aiming only at destruction, endeavours to surprise the adversary, and to hurry him to a sudden execution.

Neither is it a mere affliction that can evince either love or hatred; all is in the attendants and entertainment of afflictions.

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Where God means favour he gives, together with the cross, an humble heart, a meek spirit, a patient submission to his good pleasure, a willingness to kiss the rod and the hand that wields it, a faithful dependence upon that arm from which we smart, and, lastly, an happy use and improvement of the suffering to the bettering of the soul. Whoso finds these dispositions in himself may well take up that resolution of the sweet singer of Israel; *It is good for me that I have been afflicted. I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in very faithfulness hast afflicted me,* Ps. cxix. 71, 75.

Contrarily, where God smites in anger, those strokes are followed and accompanied with woful symptoms of a spiritual malady; either a stupid senselessness and obduredness of heart, or an impatient murmuring at the stripes, saucy and presumptuous expostulations, fretting and repining at the smart, a perverse alienation of affection, and a rebellious swelling against God, an utter dejection of spirit, and, lastly, an heartless despair of mercy. Those with whom thou hast prevailed so far as to draw them into this deadly condition of soul, have just cause to think themselves smitten in displeasure; but as for me, blessed be the name of my God, my stripes are medicinal and healing: *Let the righteous God thus smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, that shall not break my head,* Ps. cxli. 5.

VIth TEMPTATION.—"Away with these superstitious fears and needless scruples, wherewith thou fondly troublest thyself; as if God, that sits above in the circle of heaven, regarded these poor businesses that pass here below upon earth, or cared what this man doth or that man suffereth. Dost thou not see that none prosper so much in the world as those that are most noted for wickedness? and dost thou see any so miserable upon earth as the holiest? Could it be thus if there were a Providence that overlooks and overrules these earthly affairs?"—*Repelled.*

The Lord rebuke thee, Satan; even that great Lord of heaven and earth, whom thou so wickedly blasphemest.

Wouldst thou persuade me that he who is infinite in power is not also infinite in providence? He whose infinite power made all creatures both in heaven above and in earth beneath, shall not his infinite providence govern and dispose of all that he hath made?

Lo, how justly the Spirit of wisdom calls thee and thy clients

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fools and brutish things: *They say, The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard. Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall not he see? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?* Ps. xciv. 7—10. It was no limited power that could make this eye to see, this ear to hear, this heart to understand; and if that eye which he hath given us can see all things that are within our prospect; and that ear that he hath planted can hear all sounds that are within our compass; and that heart that he hath given us can know all matters within the reach of our comprehension; how much more shall the sight and hearing and knowledge of that infinite Spirit, which can admit of no bounds, extend to all the actions and events of all the creatures that lie open before him that made them!

It is *in him that we live, and move, and have our being,* Acts xvii. 28: and can we be so sottish as to think we can steal a life from him which he knows not of, or a motion that he discerneth not?

That Word of his, by whom all creatures were made, hath told me, that *not one sparrow, two* whereof *are sold for a farthing, can fall to the ground without my heavenly Father;* yea, that *the very hairs of our heads,* though a poor, neglected excrement, *are all numbered,* Matt. x. 29, 30: and can there be any thing more slight than they? How great care must we needs think is taken of the head, since not an hair can fall unregarded!

The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth down and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them, 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8.

Even Rabshakeh himself spake truer than he was aware of: *Am I now come up without the Lord against this place?* 2 Kings xviii. 25. No, certainly, thou insolent blasphemer: thou couldest not move thy tongue nor wag thy finger against God's inheritance, without the providence of that God, who returned answer to thy proud master, the king of Assyria; *I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me. Thy rage and thy tumult is come up into my ears, therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy*

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lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest, 2 Kings xix. 27, 28. So true is that word of Elihu, *His eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves,* Job xxxiv. 21, 22: seconded by the holy Psalmist; *The Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth,* Ps. xxxiii. 13, 14.

Neither is this Divine providence confined only to man, the prime piece of this visible creation, but it extends itself to all the workmanship of the Almighty: *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. So is the great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. Thou givest it them, they gather: thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good,* Ps. civ. 24, 25, 27, 28. *The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God,* ver. 21. *The ravens neither sow nor reap, nor have any storehouse or barn, yet God feedeth them. The lilies toil not, nor spin,* yet the great God clothes them with more than Solomon's glory, Luke xii. 24, 27. *Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this? in whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind;* Job xii. 9, 10.

What dost thou then, O thou false spirit, think to choke the Divine providence with the smallness and multitude of objects? as if quantities or numbers could make any difference in the Infinite; as if one drop of water were not all one to the Almighty with the whole deep, one corn of sand with the whole mass of the earth; as if that hand, which graspeth the large circumference of the highest heaven, could let slip the least fly or worm upon earth; when thou feelest, to thy pain, that this eye of omniscience, and this hand of power, reaches even to thy nethermost hell; and sees and orders every of those torments wherewith thou art everlastingly punished; and, at pleasure, puts bounds to thy malicious endeavours against his meanest creatures upon earth?

Thou tellest me of the wickedest men's prosperity. This is no new dart of thine, but the same which thou hast thrown of old at many a faithful heart. Holy Job, David, Jeremiah, felt the dint of it; not without danger, but without hurt.

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It is true, wicked men flourish: what marvel is this? the world loves his own. Doth any man wonder to see the weeds overtop the good herbs? they are natives to that soil whereto the other are but strangers.

Wicked men prosper: It is all the heaven they are like to have; and yet, alas! at the best it is but a woful one how intermixed with sorrows and discontentments! how full of uncertainties! how certain of ruin and confusion! It is a sure and sad interchange whereof father Abraham minds the man who was now more full of torment than formerly of wealth: *Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus evil: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented,* Luke xvi. 25.

The wicked man prospers: but how long? *I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree; yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: I sought him, but he could not be found,* Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36.

The wicked prosper: alas! their welfare is their judgment! God doth not owe them so much favour as to afflict them. They walk on merrily towards a deadly precipice. The just God lets them alone, and will not so much as molest their jollity with a painful check.

The wicked thrive in the world: how should they do other? Mammon is the God they serve; and what can he do less than bless them with a miserable advantage? for thus *their wealth* is made to them *an occasion of falling,* Ps. lxix. 22: *The prosperity of fools shall destroy them,* Prov. i. 32.

The wicked prosper: Let me never prosper, if I envy them. Do not I see their day coming? Do not I know that they are merely fed up to the slaughter? Wherefore do the crammed fowls and fatted oxen fare better than their fellows? Is it out of favour; or is it that they are designed to the dresser? Amnon is feasted with his brethren: those that serve him see death in his face. Belshazzar triumphs in mirth, carouseth freely in the sacred vessels; the hand writes upon the wall, *Thy days are numbered; thy kingdom finished,* Dan. v. 26. The revelling of the wicked is but a lightning before an eternal death.

Thou tellest me, on the contrary, that the godly are persecuted, *afflicted, tormented,* Heb. xi. 37.

It is true. None knows it better than thyself, who, under the permission of the Most High, art the author of all their sufferings.

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It is thou, the red dragon, that standest ready to devour the masculine issue of God's Church, Rev. xii. 4, 13. It is thou that, when the persecuted woman flees into the wilderness, pourest out of thy mouth after her floods of water to drown her, verse 15. It is thou that inspirest tyrants with rage against the innocent saints of God, and actuatest their hellish cruelty. But when thou hast all done, the most wise and mighty Arbiter of heaven turns all this to the advantage of his dear ones upon earth. The blood of the martyrs doth and shall prove the seed of the Church, whereof every grain yields thirty, sixty, an hundred fold; neither had the Church of God been so numerous, if there had been less malice in thy prosecution, Acts vii. 52. And as for those several Christians that have undergone the worst of thy fury, they are so far from finding cause of complaint, that they rejoice and triumph in the happy issue of their intended miseries: they can say to thee, as Joseph said of old to his once envious brethren, *Thou thoughtest evil against us, but God meant it unto good*, Gen. l. 20: they had not now sat so gloriously crowned in the highest heaven, if thou hadst not persecuted them unto blood.

None are so afflicted, thou sayest, as the godly: True, their Saviour hath told them beforehand what to trust to; *In the world ye shall have tribulation*, John xvi. 33. Have they any reason to look for better measure than their blessed Redeemer? *If the world hate you*, saith he, *ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you*, Matt. xxiv. 9; Luke xxi. 12, 13; John xv. 18, 19; 2 Timothy iii. 12. Now welcome, welcome that hate, that is raised from our dear Saviour's love and election. Woe were us, if we were not thus hated! Let the world hate and hurt us thus still, so we may be the favourites of heaven.

None fare so ill on earth as the godly, both living and dead: *The dead bodies of God's servants have they given to be meat to the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of his saints unto the beasts of the field. Their blood have they shed like water; and there was none to bury them. They are become a reproach to their neighbours: a scorn and derision to them that are round about them*, Ps. lxxix. 2, 3, 4. O the poor impotent malice of wicked spirits and men! What matters it if our carcasses rot upon earth while our souls shine in heavenly glory? Rev. xvi. 6.

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What matters it, if for a while *we be made a gazingstock to the world, to angels, and to men,* 1 Cor. iv. 9; while the Son of God hath assured us of an eternal royalty? *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne,* Rev. iii. 21.

None are so ill entreated as the godly: It is true; for none are so happy as they; *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil of you falsely, for my sake; rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven,* Matt. v. 10, 11, 12. Who would not endure wrongs a while to be everlastingly recompensed? Here is not place only for patience, but for joy, and that exceeding, in respect of a reward so infinitely glorious. It is no marvel then, if we be bidden to *pray for them which despitefully use* us *and persecute* us, Matt. v. 44; these are the men that are our great benefactors, and, though full sore against their wills, contribute to our eternal blessedness.

The wicked triumph while the righteous are trampled upon: What marvel? we are in a middle region, betwixt heaven and hell; but nearer to this latter, which is the place of confusion. It is but staying a while, and each place will be distinctly peopled with his own. There is a large and glorious heaven appointed for the everlasting receptacle of the just; an hell, for the godless; till then, the eternal Wisdom hath determined, for his most holy ends, to give way to this confused mixture, and to this seeming inequality of events. How easy were it for Him to make all heaven! but he hath a justice to glorify, as well as a mercy; and in the mean time it is the just praise of his infinite power, wisdom, goodness, that he can fetch the greatest good out of the worst of evils.

All things go cross here: the righteous droop; the wicked flourish: the end shall make amends for all. The world is a stage; every man acts his part. The wise compiler of this great interlude hath so contrived it, that the middle scenes show nothing but intricacy and perplexedness; the unskilful spectator is ready to censure the plot, and thinks he sees such unpleasing difficulties in the carriage of affairs as can never be reconciled; but by that time he have sat it out, he shall see all brought about to a meet accordance, and all shut up in an happy applause:

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Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him, James i. 12.

The world is an apothecary's shop, wherein there are all manner of drugs; some poisonous, others cordial. An ignorant that comes in, and knows only the quality, not the use of those receipts, will straight be ready to say, "What do these unwholesome simples, these dangerous minerals, these deadly juices here?" But the learned and skilful artist knows how so to temper all these noxious ingredients that they shall turn antidotes, and serve for the health of his patient. Thus doth the most high and holy God order these earthly though noxious compositions to the glory of his great name, and to the advantage of his chosen; so as that suggestion, wherewith thou meanest to batter the divine providence of the Almighty, doth invincibly fortify it; his most wise permission and powerful overruling of evil actions and men through the whole world, to his own honour, and the benefit of his Church.

VIIth TEMPTATION—"If God be never so liberal in his promises and sure in performances of mercy to his own, yet what is that to thee? thou art none of his, neither canst lay any just claim to his election"—*Repelled.*

How boldly can I defy thee, O thou lying spirit, while I have the assurance of Him who is the word of truth! How confidently dare I challenge thee upon that unfailing testimony, which shall stand *till heaven and earth shall pass,* Matt. v. 18. *Ye that have believed in Christ are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory!* Eph. i. 13, 14. Lo here a double assurance, which all the powers of hell shall in vain labour to defeat—the Almighty's seal, and his earnest, both made and given to the believer, and therefore to me.

In spite of all temptations, I believe and know whom I have believed. I can accuse my faith of weakness; thou canst not convince it of untruth. And all the precious promises of the gospel, and all the gracious engagements of God, are made, not to the measure, but to the truth of our belief: and why should not I as truly know that I rely upon the word of my Saviour, as I know that I distrust and reject thine?

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Since then I am a subject truly capable of this mercy, what can hinder me from enjoying it? Cheer thyself up therefore, O my soul, with this undefeasible confidence, that thou hast God's seal and his earnest for thy salvation.

Even an honest man will not be less than his word; but if his hand have seconded his tongue, he holds the obligation yet stronger; but if his seal shall be further added to his hand, there is nothing that can give more validity to the grant or contract. Yet even of the value of seals there is much difference; the seal of a private man carries so much authority as his person; the seal of a community hath so much more security in it as there are more persons interested; but the signet of a king hath wont to be held to all purposes authentical; as we find, to omit Ahab, in the signatures of Ahasuerus and Darius. Who desires any better assurance for the estate of him and his posterity than the great seal? And, behold, here is no less than the great seal of heaven for my election and salvation: *Ye are sealed with the Spirit of promise.*

But, lest thou shouldest plead this to be but a grant of the future, and therefore, perhaps, upon some intervenient misdemeanors or unkindness taken, reversible; know that here is yet further, an actual conveyance of this mercy to me, in that here is an earnest given me beforehand of a perfect accomplishment; an earnest that both binds the assurance, and stands for part of payment of that great sum of glory which abides for me in heaven.

This seal I show; this earnest I produce: so as my securance is unfailable.

And that thou mayest not plead this seal to be counterfeit, set on only with a stamp of presumption and self-love, know that here is the true and clear impression of God's Spirit in all the lines of that gracious signature: a right, though weak, illumination of mind, in the true apprehension of heavenly things; sincerity of holy desires; truth of inchoate holiness; unfeignedness of Christian charity; constant purposes and endeavours of perfect obedience.

And as for my earnest, it can no more disappoint me than the hand that gave it. My soul is possessed with true, however imperfect grace: and what is grace, but the beginning of glory? and what is glory; but the consummation of grace? What

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should I regard thy cavils, while I have these pledges of the Almighty?

It is not in thy power, malicious spirit, to sever those things which God's eternal decree hath put together. Our *calling* and *election* are thus conjoined from eternity, 2 Peter i. 10: all the craft and force of hell cannot divorce them: *Whom he did predestinate, them also he called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justifieth, them also he glorifieth,* Rom. viii. 30.

It is true, that outwardly many are called, but few chosen; but none are inwardly called which are not also chosen.

In which number is my poor soul: whereto God hath showed mercy in singling it out of this wicked world into the liberty of the sons of God. For do not I find myself sensibly changed from what I was? Am I not evidently freed from the bondage of those natural corruptions under which thou heldst me miserably captived? Do I not hate the courses of my former disobedience? Do I not give willing ear to the voice of the gospel? Do I not desire and endeavour to conform myself wholly to the will of my God and Saviour? Do I not heartily grieve for my spiritual failings? Do not I earnestly pray for grace to resist all thy temptations? Do not I cordially affect the means of grace and salvation? Do I not labour, in all things, to keep a good conscience before God and men? Are not these the infallible proofs of my calling, and the sure and certain fruits of mine election? Canst thou hope to persuade me that God will bestow these favours where he loves not? that he will repent him of such mercies? that he will lose the thanks and honour of so gracious proceedings? Suggest what thou wilt, I am more than *confident, that he who hath begun this good work in* me *will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ,* Phil. i. 6. Do not I hear the Chosen Vessel tell his Thessalonians, that he knows them to be elected of God? And upon what grounds doth he raise this assurance? *For,* saith he, *our gospel came not to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost,* 1 Thess. i. 5. That which can assure us of another man's election may much more secure us of our own; the entertainment and success of the gospel in our souls. Lo, that blessed word hath wrought in me a sensible abatement of my corrupt affections, and hath produced an apparent renovation of my mind,

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and hath quickened me to a new life of grace and obedience; this can be no work of nature: this can be no other than the work of that Spirit *whereby* I am *sealed to the day of redemption*, Eph. iv. 30. My heart feels the power of the gospel, my life expresses it, maugre all thy malice; therefore I am elected.

When the gates of hell have done their worst, none of God's children can miscarry; for *if children, then they are heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ*, Rom. viii. 17. Now, *as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God*, ver. 14; and this is the direction that I follow.

There are but three guides that I can be led by: my own will, thy suggestions, the motions of God's Spirit. For my own will, I were no Christian if I had not learned to deny it where it stands opposite to the will of my God. As for thy suggestions, I hate and defy them. They are only, therefore, the motions of that good Spirit which I desire to follow; and if at any time my own frailty have betrayed me to some aberrations, my repentance hath overtaken my offence; and in sincerity of heart I can say with an holier man, *I have gone astray like a sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments*, Psalm cxix. 176. All thy malice, therefore, cannot rob me of the comfort of mine adoption.

It is no marvel, if thou, who art all enmity, canst not abide to hear of love; but *God*, who *is love*, hath told me, that *love is of God, and* that *every one that loveth is born of God*, 1 John iv. 8, 7, and that by this *we know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren*, ch. iii. 14. Now my heart can irrefragably witness to me, that I love God, because he is good; infinitely good in himself, and infinitely good to me; and that I love good men, because they are his sons, my brethren. I am therefore as surely passed from death to life, as if I had set my foot over the threshold of heaven.

VIIIth TEMPTATION—"Alas, poor man, how grossly deludest thou thyself! thou talkest of thy faith, and bearest thyself high upon this grace, and thinkest to do great matters by it; whereas, the truth is, thou hast no faith; but that which thou miscallest so is nothing else but mere presumption"—*Repelled.*

Is it any wonder that thou shouldest slander the graces of God, who art ever ready to calumniate the giver? No, tempter! canst thou challenge this faith of mine, which thou censurest, to

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be thine own work? such it should be, if it were presumption. Were it presumption, wouldest thou oppose it? wouldest thou not foster and applaud it as thine? The presumption is thine, who darest thus derogate from the gracious work of the Almighty, and fasten sin upon the Holy Spirit. Mine is faith: yet so mine, as that it is his that wrought it.

There is not more difference betwixt thee and an angel of light than betwixt my faith and thy presumption.

True faith (such is mine, after all thy slanderous suggestions) is grounded upon sound knowledge; and that knowledge, upon an infallible word. Whereas presumption rests only upon opinion and conceit; built upon the sands of self-love. Whence it is, that the most ignorant are ever the most presumptuous; when the knowing soul sees what dangers it is to encounter, and provides for them with an awful resolution.

True faith never comes without careful and diligent use of means. The word, sacraments, prayer, meditation, are but enough, with their conjoined forces, to produce so divine a work. Whereas presumption comes with ease: it costs nothing; no strife, no labour, to draw forth so worthless and vicious a disposition; yea, rather, corrupt nature is forward, not only to offer it to us, but even to force it upon our admission; and it is no small mastery to repel it.

True faith struggles with infidelity. This Jacob is wrestling with this Esau in the womb of the soul: and if at any time the worse part, through the violence of a temptation, get the start of the better, the hand lays hold on the heel, and suffers not itself to be any other than insensibly prevented, but recovers the light ere the suggestion can be fully completed; and at last so far prevails, that the elder shall serve the younger; *This is the victory, that overcomes the world, even our faith*, 1 John v. 4. Whereas presumption is ever quiet and secure; not fearing any peril; not combating with any doubt; pleasing itself in its own ease and safety; and in the confidence of a perpetual prosperity can say, *I shall never be moved*, Ps. xxx. 6.

True faith, wheresoever it is, *purifieth the heart*, Acts xv. 9, and will not suffer any known sin to harbour there; and is ever attended with care, awfulness, love, obedience. Whereas presumption impures the soul; and works it to boldness, obduration, false joy, security, senselessness.

True faith grows daily; like the grain of mustard seed in the

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gospel, which, from small beginnings, arises to a tall and large spreading plant. Presumption hath enough, and sits down contented with its own measure; applauding the happiness of its own condition.

True faith, like gold, comes out pure from the fire of temptation; and, like to sound friendship, is most helpful in the greatest need. Presumption, upon the easiest trial, vanisheth into smoke and dross, and is never so sure to fail us as in the evil day.

So then, this firm affiance of mine, being grounded upon the most sure promises of the God of truth, upon frequent use and improvement of all holy means, after many bickerings with thy motions of unbelief; being attended with holy and purifying dispositions of the soul, and gathering still more strength, and growing up daily towards a longed for perfection, and which now thy experience convinces thee to be most present and comfortable in the hour of temptation, is true faith: not, as thou falsely suggestest, a false presumption.

It is true, my unworthiness is great; but I have to do with an Infinite Mercy: so as my wretched unworthiness doth but heighten the glory of his most merciful pardon and acceptation.

Shortly, then, where there is a divine promise of free grace and mercy, a true apprehension and embracing of that promise, a warrant and acceptance of that apprehension, a willing reliance upon that warrant, a sure knowledge and sense of that reliance, there can be no place for presumption.

This is the case betwixt God and my soul. His word of promise and warrant, that cannot deceive me, is, *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life*, John iii. 36: and, *He that believes in him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but hath passed from death to life*, John v. 24. My own heart irrefragably makes out the rest, which is the truth of my apprehension, reliance, knowledge. Mine, therefore, is the faith; the presumption, in casting slander upon the grace of God's Spirit, is thine own.

IXth TEMPTATION—"Thou thoughtest perhaps once, that thou hadst some tokens of God's favour; but now thou canst not but find that he hath utterly forsaken thee; and, withdrawing himself from thee, hath given thee up into my hands; to which thy sins have justly forfeited thee"—*Repelled.*

Be not discouraged, O thou weak soul, with this malicious

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suggestion of the enemy. Thou art not the first, nor the holiest, that hath been thus assailed.

So hard was the man after God's own heart driven with this temptation, that he cries out in the bitterness of his soul, *Will the Lord cast* me *off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore?* Psalm lxxvii. 7, 8, 9.

Thy case was his, for the sense of the desertion: why should not his case be thine, for the remedy? Mark how happily and how soon he recovers himself: *And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High: I will remember the works of the Lord: surely, I will remember thy wonders of old: I will meditate of all thy works,* Psalm lxxvii. 10—12.

Lo, how wisely and faithfully David retreats back to the sure hold of God's formerly experimented mercies; and there finds a sensible relief. He that, when he was to encounter with the proud giant, could beforehand arm himself with the proof of God's former deliverances and victories; *Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them,* 1 Sam. xvii. 36: now animates himself, after the temptation, against the spiritual Goliath, with the like remembrance of God's ancient mercies and endearments to his soul; as well knowing that, whatever we are, God cannot but be himself: *God is not as a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent,* Numb. xxiii. 19. *Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end,* John xiii. 1.

Hast thou therefore formerly found the sure testimonies of God's favour to thee, in the real pledges of his holy graces? live thou still, while thou art thus besieged with temptations, upon the old store. Know that thou hast to do with a God that can no more change than not be: Satan cannot be more constant to his malice, than thy God is to his everlasting mercies. He may for a time be pleased to withdraw himself from thee, but it is that he may make thee so much more happy in his reappearance. It is his own word, *For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer,* Is. liv. 7, 8.

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In the case wherein thou now art, thou canst be no meet judge either of God's respects to thee or thine own condition. Can the aguish palate pass any true judgment upon the taste of liquors? Can the child entertain any apprehension of his parent's favour while he is under the lash? Can any man look that the fire should give either flame or heat while it lies covered with ashes? Can any man expect fruit or leaves from the tree in the midst of winter? Thou art now in a fit of temptation; thou art now smarting under the rod of correction; thy faith lies raked up under the cold ashes of a seeming desertion; the vegetative life of thy soul is in this hard season of thy trial drawn inward and run down to the root: thine estate is nevertheless safe for this, though more uncomfortable. Wait thou upon God's leisure with all humble submission, the event shall be happy; when the distemper is once over, thou shalt return to thy true relish of God's mercy; when thine heavenly Father shall smile upon thee, and take thee up in his arms, thou wilt see love in his late stripes; when those dead ashes shall be removed, and the gleeds of grace stirred up again in thee, thou shalt yield both light and warmth; when the Sun of Righteousness shall approach to thee, and with his comfortable beams draw up the sap into the branches, thou shalt blossom and flourish. In the mean time fear nothing; only believe, and thou shalt see the salvation of the Lord. Thy soul is in surer hands than thine own; yea, than of the greatest angel in heaven: far out of the reach of all the powers of hell; for, *our life is hid with Christ in God,* Col. iii. 3; hid; not lost, not laid open to all eyes, but hid; hid where Satan cannot touch it, cannot find it; even with Christ in the heaven of heavens.

Fear not therefore, O thou feeble soul, any utter dereliction of thy God. Thou art bought with a price: God paid too dear for thee, and is too deeply engaged to thee, to lose thee willingly; and, for any force to be offered to the Almighty, what can men or devils do?

And if that malignant spirit shall challenge any forfeiture, plead thou thy full redemption. It is true, the eternal and inviolable law hath said, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them,* Gal. iii. 10; and, *The soul that sinneth shall die,* Ezek. xviii. 4, 20. Death and curse is therefore due to thee; but thou hast paid both of these in thy blessed Redeemer; *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us,* Gal. iii. 13.

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Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. v. 20, 21. It is all one to pay thy debt in thine own person, and by thy surety. Thy gracious surety hath staked it down for thee to the utmost farthing. Be confident therefore of thy safe condition; thou art no less sure than thine adversary is malicious.

Xth TEMPTATION—"Had God ever given thee any sure testimonies of his love, thou mightest perhaps pretend to some reason of comfort and confidence: but the truth is, God never loved thee: he may have cast upon thee some common favours, such as he throws away upon reprobates, but for the tokens of any special love that he bears to thee, thou never didst, never shalt receive any from him"—*Repelled.*

This is language well befitting the professed makebate betwixt God and man; but know, O thou false tempter, that I have received sure and infallible testimonies of that special love which is proper to his elect.

First, then, (as I have to do with a bountiful God, who where he loves there he enriches, so) I have received most precious gifts from his hands; such as do not import a common and ordinary beneficence which he scatters promiscuously amongst the sons of men, but such as carry in them a dearness and singularity of divine favour; even the greatest gifts that either he can give or man receive.

For, first, *he hath given* me *his Spirit; the Spirit of adoption, whereby* I can *call him Father;* for the assurance whereof, *the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God,* 1 John iv. 13; Rom. viii. 15, 16. Deny, if thou canst, the invaluableness of this heavenly gift; and if thy malice cannot detract from the worth, but from the propriety [property], yielding it to be great, but denying it to be mine; know, O thou envious spirit, that here is the witness of two spirits combined against thine; were the testimonies single, surely I had reason to believe my own spirit rather than thine, which is a spirit of error; but now that the Spirit of God conjoins his inerrable testimony together with my spirit against thy single suggestion, how just cause have I to be confident of my possession of that glorious and blessed gift! Neither is that good Spirit dead or dumb, but vocal and operative; it gives me a tongue to call God, Father; it teach-

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eth me to pray; it *helpeth* mine *infirmities, and maketh intercession for* me, *with groanings which cannot be uttered,* Rom. viii. 26; it worketh effectually in me a sensible conversion; even when I was *dead in sins and trespasses; God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved* me, hath, by this Spirit of his, *quickened* me *together with Christ, and hath raised* me *up together with him,* Eph. ii. 1, 4, 5, 6. By the blessed effects, therefore, of his regenerating Spirit happily begun in my soul, I find how rich a treasure the Father of mercies hath conveyed into my bosom. Besides, my life shows what is in my heart: it was a gracious word that God spake to his people of old, and holds for ever; *I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes: I will also save you from all your uncleannesses,* Ezek. xxxvi. 27, 29. The Spirit of God can never be severed from obedience. If the heart be taken up with the Holy Spirit, the feet must walk in God's statutes, 1 John v. 3; and both heart and life must be freed from all wilful uncleannesses. I feel that God hath wrought all this in me; from him it is that I do sincerely desire and endeavour to make straight steps in all the ways of God, and to avoid and abhor all those foul corruptions of my sinful nature. Flesh and blood hath not, would not, could not work this in me: *The Spirit,* therefore, *of him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in* me, Rom. viii. 11. And if this be not a pledge of his dearest love, heaven cannot yield one.

Moreover, he hath bestowed upon me another gift, more worth than all the world; his own Son; the Son of his love; the Son of his nature by eternal generation; whom he hath not only given for me in a generality with the rest of mankind, but hath by a special donation conveyed unto me, and, as it were, put into my bosom, in that he hath enabled me, by a lively faith, to bring him home unto my soul; and hath thus, by a particular application, made him mine, so as my soul is not more mine than he is my soul's. And having given me his Son, he hath with him given me all things. If there can be greater tokens of love than these, let me want them.

Besides his gifts, his carriage doth abundantly argue his love. Were there a strangeness between God and my soul, I might well fear there were no other than overly respects from him towards me; but now, when I find he doth so freely and familiarly converse with his servant, and so graciously imparts himself to me, renewing the daily testimonies of his holy presence in the frequent

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motions of his good Spirit, answered by the returns of an humble and thankful obedience; here is not love only, but entireness. What other is that poor measure of love, which our wretched meanness can return unto our God, but a weak reflection of that fervent love which he bears unto us? It is the word of Divine wisdom, *I love them that love me*, Prov. viii. 17; and the disciple of love can tell us the due order of love; *We love him, because he first loved us*, 1 John iv. 19. *The love of God*, therefore, which *is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us*, Rom. v. 5, is an all-sufficient conviction of God's tender love unto us. My heart tells me then that I love God truly though weakly; God tells me that he embraceth me with an everlasting love, which thy malice may snarl at, but can never abate.

THE THIRD DECADE.

TEMPTATIONS OF ALLUREMENT.

Ist TEMPTATION—"Thou hast hitherto, thus long, given entertainment to thy sin, and no inconveniency hath ensued, no evil hath befallen thee; thy affairs have prospered better than thy scrupulous neighbour's: why shouldest thou shake off a companion that hath been both harmless and pleasant? Go on, man; sin fearlessly: thou shalt speed no worse than thou hast done: go on and thrive in thine old course, while some precisely conscientious beg and starve in their innocence"—*Repelled.*

It is right so, as wise Solomon observed of old; *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil*, Eccl. viii. 11.

Wicked spirit! what a deadly fallacy is this which thou puttest upon miserable souls! Because they have aged in their sins, therefore they must die in them; because they have lived in sin, therefore they must age in it; because they have prospered in their sin, therefore they must live in it; whereas all these should be strong arguments to the contrary. There cannot be a greater proof of God's disfavour thanfor a man to prosper in wickedness; neither can there be a more forcible inducement to a man to forsake his sin than this, that he hath entertained it.

What dost thou other in this than persuade the poor sinner to

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despise the riches of the goodness and forbearance and long-suffering of God, which should *lead* him *to repentance; and after* his *hardness and impenitent heart* to *treasure up unto* himself *wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God?* Rom. ii. 4, 5. What an horrible abuse is this of Divine mercy! That which is intended to lead us to repentance is now urged by thee to draw us from repentance. Should the justice of God have cut off the sinner in the flagrance of his wicked fact, there had been no room for his penitence; and now God gives him a fair respite for his repentance, thou turnest this into a provocation of sinning.

Let the case for the present be mine. If sin have so far bewitched me as to win me to dally with it, must I therefore be wedded to it? or if I be once wedded to it through the importunity of temptation, shall I be tied to a perpetual cohabitation with that fiend, and not free myself by a just divorce? Because I have once yielded to be evil, must I therefore be worse? Because I have happily, by the mercy of my God, escaped hell in sinning, shall I willfully run myself headlong into the pit by continuing in sin? No, wicked one; I know how to make better use of God's favour and my own miscarriages. I cannot reckon it amongst my comforts that I prospered in evil. Let obdured hearts bless themselves in such advantages; but I adore that goodness that forbore me in my iniquity; neither dare provoke it any more. Think not to draw me on by the lucky success of my sin, which thou hast wanted no endeavour to promote. Better had it been for me if I had fared worse in the course of my sinning; but had I been yet outwardly more happy, do I not know that God vouchsafes his showers and his sunshine to the fields of those whose persons he destines to the fire? Can I be ignorant of that which holy Job observed in his time, that *the tabernacles of the wicked prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly?* Job xii. 6: that *they spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave?* ch. xxi. 13: and, as the Psalmist seconds him, *there are no bands in their death; but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble like other men; therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain!* Ps. lxxiii. 4, 5, 6. And let these jolly men brave it out in the glorious pomp of their unjust greatness; the same eyes that noted their exultation have also observed their downfall: *They are exalted for a little while,* saith Job, *but they*

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are gone and brought low; they are taken out of the way as all others, and cut off as the tops of the ears of corn, Job xxiv. 24: and in his answer to Zophar, *Where are the dwellingplaces of the wicked? Have ye not asked them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens, that the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath*, ch. xxi. 28, 29, 30. *The eyes of the wicked*, even those scornful and contemptuous eyes which they have cast upon God's poor despised ones, *shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost*, ch. xi. 20.

How false an inference then is this, whereby thou goest about to delude my soul; "Thou hast hitherto prospered in thy wickedness; therefore thou shalt prosper in it still and ever; to morrow shall be as yesterday, and more abundant!" As if the just God had not set a period to iniquity. As if he had not said to the most insolent sinner, as to the raging sea, *Here shalt thou stay thy proud waves.* How many rich epicures have, with Crassus, supped in Apollo, and broken their fast with Beelzebub, the prince of devils! How many have lain down to sleep out their surfeit, and have waked in hell! Were my times in thy hand, thou wouldest not suffer me long to enjoy my sin, and forbear the seizure of my soul; but now they are in the hands of a righteous God, who is jealous of his own glory; he will be sure not to overpass those hours, which he hath set for thy torment, or my account.

Shortly therefore I will withdraw my foot from every evil way, and walk holily with my God, however I speed in the world. Let me, with the conscientious men, beg or starve in my innocence, rather than thrive in my wickedness, and get hell to boot.

IInd TEMPTATION—"Sin still: thou shalt repent soon enough when thou canst sin no more; thine old age and death-bed are fit seasons for those sad thoughts. It will go hard if thou mayest not at the last have a mouthful of breath left thee to cry God mercy; and that is no sooner asked than had. Thou hast to do with a God of mercies, with whom no time is too late, no measure too slight to be accepted"—*Repelled.*

Of all the blessed attributes of God, whereby he is willing to make himself known unto men, there is none by which he more delights to be set forth than that of mercy; when therefore he would proclaim his style to Moses, this is the title which he most

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insists upon; *The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin,* Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7. And all his holy heralds, the prophets, have still been careful to blazon him thus to the world; Num. xiv. 18; Ps. ciii. 8; cxlv. 8, 9; Exod. xx. 6; Ps. lxxxvi. 15; Neh. ix. 30, 31; Lam. iii. 31, 32; Jonah iv. 2; Micah vii. 18; Ps. lxxii. 13.

Neither is there any of those divine attributes that is so much abused by men as this, which is most beneficial to mankind. For the wisdom of God, every man professes to adore it; for the power of God, every man magnifies it; for the justice of God, every man trembles at it; but for the mercy and longsufferance of God, how apt are men and devils to wrong it by a sinful misapplication!

Wicked tempter! how ready art thou to misimprove God's patience to the encouragement of my sin; and to persuade me therefore to offend him, because he is good; and to continue in sin, because grace abounds!

Thou biddest me sin still: God forbids me, upon pain of death, to sin at all: whether should I listen to?

God calls me to a speedy repentance: thou persuadest me to defer it: whether counsel should I hold more safe? Surely there cannot be but danger in the delay of it; in the speed, there can be nothing but a comfortable hope of acceptation. It is not possible for me to repent too soon; too late I may. To repent for my sin, when I can sin no more, what would it be other than to be sorry that I can no more sin? and what thank is it to me that I would and am disabled to offend?

Thou tellest me that mine age and death-bed are meet seasons for my repentance; as if time and grace were in my power to command. How know I whether I shall live till age? yea, till to-morrow? yea, till the next hour? Do not I see how fickle my life is; and shall I, with the foolish virgins, delay the buying of my oil till the doors be shut? But let me live: have I repentance in a string, that I may pull it to me when I list? is it not the great gift of that good Spirit which breatheth when and where it pleaseth? it is now offered to me in this time of grace; if I now refuse it, perhaps I may seek it with tears in vain. I know the gates of hell stand always wide open to receive all comers: not so the gates of heaven; they are shut upon the impenitent; and

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never opened but in the seasons of mercy. The porches of Bethesda were full of cripples expecting cure: those waters were not always sanative: if, when the angel descends and moves the water, we take not our first turn, we may wait too long. But of all other, that season whereon thou pitchest, my death-bed, is most unseasonable for this work, most serviceable for thy purpose. How many thousand souls hast thou deluded with this plausible but deadly suggestion! for then, alas! how is the whole man taken up with the sense of pain; with grappling with the disease; with answering the condoling of friends; with disposing the remainder of our estate; with repelling, then most importunate, temptations; with encountering the horrors and pangs of an imminent dissolution! And what room is there then for a serious task of repentance? No, wicked one, I see thy drift: thou wouldest fain persuade me to do like some idle wanton servants, who play and talk out their candle-light, and then go darklings to bed: I hate the motion, and do gladly embrace this happy opportunity, which God holds forth to me, of my present conversion.

Thou tellest me how hard it would be if I should not have one mouthful of breath, at the last, to implore mercy: I tell thee of many a one that hath not had so much; neither hath it been hard, but just, that those who have had so many and earnest solicitations from a merciful God, and have given a deaf ear to them, should not, at the last, have a tongue to ask that mercy which they have so often refused. But let me have wind enough left to redouble the name of mercy, am I sure, upon so short warning, to obtain it? How many are there that shall say, *Lord, Lord,* and yet shall be answered with—*Depart from me, I know you not?* Do I not hear that God, whom vain men frame all of mercy, say, even of his Israel, *I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them?* Jer. xiii. 14. There is a time for judgment as well as a time for mercy: neither of these may encroach upon other; as judgment may not be allowed to seize upon the soul during the season of mercy; so neither may mercy put forth itself to rescue the soul in an execution of judgment; both must have their due turns; let me sue, therefore, for grace, ere the time of grace be overpassed. Heaven is as a strong castle, whereto there is but one way of entrance: the drawbridge is let down all the day: all that while the passage is open: let me stay till night, the bridge is hoised up, the way precluded: I may now stand without, and call

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long enough for an hopeless admittance. It shall be my care to get within those gates ere my sun be set; while the willing neglecters of mercy shall find hell open, heaven inaccessible.

IIIrd TEMPTATION—"Thou art one of God's chosen. Now God sees no sin in his elect; none therefore in thee: neither mayest thou then take notice of any sin in thyself, or needest any repentance for thy sin"—*Repelled.*

Deceitful tempter! now thou wouldest fain flatter me into hell, and make God's favour a motive of my damnation. I doubt not but I am, through God's mercy, one of his chosen: his free grace in Christ my Saviour hath put upon me this honour; neither will I fear to challenge any of the happy privileges of my election.

But that this should be one of the special prerogatives of grace, that God should see no sin in me, I hate to hear. That God imputes no sin to his elect is a divine truth; but that he sees no sin in his elect is a conceit hatched in hell.

For tell me, thou Antinomian spirit, if God see no sin in his elect, is the reason on the behalf of God or of the sin? either for that there is no sin at all to be seen, or for that though there be sin in them, yet God sees it not?

If the former, it must be either in relation to the person of the sinner or to the act and nature of the sin; either that he cannot do that act which is formally sin, or, that though he do such an act, yet in him it is no sin.

If the latter, it must be either for the defect of his omniscience or upon a willing connivance.

In each of these there is gross error; in some of them, blasphemy.

For, first, what can be more evident, than that the holiest of God's elect upon earth fall, and that not unfrequently, into sin? *Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?* Prov. xx. 9, was the just challenge of wise Solomon. And his father before him said no less; *There is none that doeth good, no, not one,* Psalm xiv. 3; Rom. iii. 12; and elsewhere, *Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults,* Psalm xix. 12. *We all,* saith the prophet Isaiah, putting himself into the number, *have like sheep gone astray; we have turned every one to his own ways,* Isaiah liii. 6. And wherefore

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were those legal expiations of old by the blood of their sacrifices, but for the acknowledged sins both of priests and people? Levit. iv. 2, 13, 22; Num. xv. 24. Persuade us, if thou canst, that our election exempts us from being men: for certainly, while we are men we cannot but be sinners: so sure is that parenthesis of Solomon, *There is no man that sinneth not*, 1 Kings viii. 46, as that, *If we say we have no sin, we* both *deceive ourselves, and* make God a liar, 1 John i. 8, 10.

What then? That which in itself is sin, is it not sin in the elect? Doth evil turn good as it falls from their person? Where did the holy God infuse such virtue into any creature? Surely, so deadly is the infection of sin, that it makes the person evil: but that the holiness of the person should make the sin less evil, is an hellish monster of opinion. Yea, so far is it from that, as that the holiness of the person adds to the heinousness of the sin: the adultery had not been so odious, if a David had not committed it; nor the abjuration of Christ so grievous, if it had not fallen from him that said, *Though all men, yet not I.* Sin is sin even in an angel; and the worse, for the eminence of the actor: for what is sin but *the transgression of the law*, in whomsoever? 1 John iii. 4. Wheresoever therefore transgression is, there is guilt. And such, the best of all God's saints have acknowledged and lamented in themselves; *Woe is me*, saith the prophet Isaiah, *for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips*, ch. vi. 5. *The evil that I would not do, that I do*, saith the Chosen Vessel, Rom. vii. 19. Yea, *in many things*, saith St. James, *we offend all*, James iii. 2.

It is true, that as the beloved disciple hath taught us, *He that is born of God sinneth not*, 1 John v. 18; iii. 9: not that he may not fall into the same act of sin with the most carnal man, but that he sins not in the same manner: the one sins with all his heart, with the full sway of his will; the other, not without a kind of renitency: the one makes a trade of his sin; the other steps only aside through the vehemence of a temptation: the one sins with an high hand; the other, out of mere infirmity: the one walks on securely and resolutely, as obfirmed in his wickedness; the other is smitten with a seasonable remorse for his offence: the one delights and prides himself in his sin; the other, as he sinned bashfully, so he hates himself for sinning: the one grows up daily to a greater height of iniquity; the other improves his sin to the bettering of his soul. But this difference of sin, as it makes sin un-

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measurably sinful in the worst men; so it doth not quite annul it in the holiest: it is their sin still, though it reign not in them, though it kill them not.

While, then, there cannot but be sin in the elect, is it possible that God should not see it there? Is there any thing in heaven or earth or hell that can be hid from his all-seeing eyes? Where should this sin lurk, that he should not espy it? Do not the secrets of all hearts lie open before him? Are not *his eyes a flame of fire?* Rev. i. 14. Is it not expressly noted as an aggravation of evil, *Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord?* 1 Kings xiv. 22: and, *Our transgressions*, saith Isaiah, *are multiplied before thee*, Isaiah lix. 12. It is out of his infinite holiness that he cannot abide to behold sin: but it is out of his absolute omniscience that there is no sin which he beholds not; and out of his infinite justice that he beholds no sin which he hates not. Is it, then, for that sin hath no being; as that, which is only a failing and privation of that rectitude and integrity which should be in us and our actions, without any positive entity in itself? Upon this ground, God should see no sin at all; no, not in the wickedest man upon earth: and whereas wicked men do nothing but sin, it should follow, that God takes no notice of most of the actions that are done in the world; whereof the very thought were blasphemy.

Since, then, it cannot be out of defect of knowledge that God sees not the sins of his elect, is it out of a favourable connivance that he is willing not to see what he sees? Surely, if the meaning be, that God sees not the sins of the penitent with a revengeful eye, that out of a merciful indulgence he will not prosecute the sins whereof we have repented with due vengeance, but passes them by as if they had not been; we do so gladly yield to this truth, that we can never bless God enough for this wonderful mercy to poor sinners. It is his gracious word which we lay ready hold upon, *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins*, Isaiah xliii. 25. But if the meaning be, that God bears with sin because theirs, that he so winks at it as that he neither sees nor detests it as it falls from so dear actors, it is no other than a blasphemous charge of injustice upon the Holy One of Israel; *Your iniquities*, saith Isaiah, speaking of God's chosen people, *have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear*, Isa. lix. 2. Who was dearer to God than the man after his own heart? yet when he had given way to those

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foul sins of adultery and murder, Nathan tells him from God, *Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, &c.* 2 Sam. xii. 10, 11. How full and clear is that complaint of Moses the man of God: *We are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance,* Ps. xc. 7, 8. And Jeremiah to the same purpose, *We have transgressed and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned. Thou hast covered with anger, and persecuted us: thou hast slain, thou hast not pitied us. Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that our prayer should not pass through,* Lam. iii. 42, 43, 44.

Doubtless, then, God so sees sin in his elect, that he both more notes and hates sin more in his dearest children than in any other.

Upon this impious supposition of God's not seeing sin in his chosen, wouldest thou raise that hellish suggestion, That a man must see no sin in himself, no repentance for sin? than which, what wider gap can be opened to a licentious stupidity! For that a man should commit sin, as Lot did his incest, not knowing that he doth the fact, what is it, but to bereave him of his senses? To commit that fact which he may not know to be sin, what is it but to bereave him of reason? Not to be sorry for the sin he hath committed, what is it but to bereave him of grace? How contrary is this to the mind and practice of all God's saints! Holy Job could say, *How many are mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin,* Job xiii. 23: and at last, when God had wrought accordingly upon his heart, *I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes,* Job xlii. 6. Penitent David could say, *I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me,* Ps. li. 3: and elsewhere, *I will declare mine iniquity, and be sorry for my sin,* Ps. xxxviii. 18: and Solomon's suppliant, that would hope for audience in heaven, must *know the plague of his own heart,* 1 Kings viii. 38.

Carry on, therefore, thy deluded clients in a willing ignorance of their sins, and a secure regardlessness of their repentance; for me, I will ransack my heart for my secret sins; and find no peace in my soul till it be truly sensible of my own repentance and God's remission.

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IVth TEMPTATION—"Thou mayest live as thou listest; thy destiny is irreversible. If thou be predestined to life, thy sins cannot damn thee; for God's election remaineth certain: if thou be ordained to damnation, all thy good endeavours cannot save thee. Please thyself on earth; thou canst not alter what is done in heaven"—*Repelled.*

The suggestion is pernicious; and such as that Satan's quiver hath not many shafts more deadly: for wherever it enters, it renders a man carelessly desperate, and utterly regardless either of good or evil; bereaving him at once both of grace and wit.

The story tells us of a great prince tainted with this poison, whom his wise physician happily cured: for being called to the sick bed of him whom he knew thus dangerously resolved, instead of medicine he administers to his patient this just conviction: "Sir, you are conscious of your stiff opinion concerning predestination: why do you send to me for the cure of your sickness? Either you are predestinated to recover and live, or else you are in God's decree appointed to die: if you be ordained to live and recover, you shall live, though you take no helps of physic from me; but if to die, all my art and means cannot save you." The convinced prince saw and felt his error, and recanted it; as well perceiving how absurd and unreasonable it is, in whatsoever decree of either temporal or spiritual good, to sever the means from the end; being both equally determined, and the one in way to the other.

The comparison is clear and irrefragable: God's decree is equally both certain and secret for bodily health and life eternal. The means appointed are food and medicine, for the one; and for the other, repentance, faith, obedience: in the use of these we may live; we cannot but die in their neglect. Were it any other than madness in me to rely upon a presupposed decree, willingly forbearing the while the means whereby it is brought about? To say, "If I shall live, I shall live though I eat not; if I shall die, though I eat I shall not live: therefore I will not eat; but cast myself upon God's providence, whether to live or die:" in doing thus, what am I other than a self-murderer?

It is a prevailing policy of the devil, so to work by his temptations upon the heart of man, that in temporal things he shall trust to the means, without regard to the providence of the God that gives them; in spiritual, he should cast himself upon the providence of a God, without respect to the means whereby they

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are effected: whereas if both these go not together, we lose either God or ourselves or both.

It is true, that if God had peremptorily declared his absolute will concerning the state or event of any creature, we might not endeavour or hope to alter his decree. If God have said to a Moses, *Go up to the mount, and die there*, it is not for that obedient servant of God to say, "Yet I will lay up some years' provision, if perchance I may yet live."

Although even thus, in the minatory declarations of God's purpose, because we know not what conditions may be secretly intended, we may use what means we may for a diversion. The Ninevites heard that express word from Jonah, *Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed;* and, though they believed the prophet, yet they betook themselves to an universal humiliation for the prevention of the judgment. David heard from the mouth of Nathan, *The child that is born unto thee shall surely die*, 2 Sam. xii. 14: yet he besought God, and fasted, and lay all night upon the earth, and could say, *Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live?* ver. 22. Good Hezekiah was sick unto death; and hears from Isaiah, *Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live*, 2 Kings xx. 1, 2: yet *he turns his face to the wall, and prays;* and makes use of his bunch of figs, and recovers, ver. 7.

But where the counsel of God is altogether secret, without the least glimpse of revelation, for a man to pass a peremptory doom upon himself, and either, thereupon, wilfully to neglect the known means of his good, or to run willingly upon those courses which will necessarily work his destruction; it is the highest degree of madness that can be incident into a reasonable creature.

The Father of mercies hath appointed means of the salvation of mankind, which lie open to them, if they would not be wanting to themselves; but especially to us, who are within the bosom of his Church, he hath held forth saving helps in abundance. What warnings, what reproofs, what exhortations, what invitations, what entreaties, what importunities hath he forborne for our conversion! what menaces, what afflictions, what judgments hath he not made use of for the prevention of our damnation! Can there be now any man so desperately mad as to shut heaven gates against himself, which the merciful God leaves open for him? or, as to break open the gates of hell, and rush violently into the pit of destruction, which God had latched against him?

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Thou sayest, "If I be predestined to life, my sins cannot damn me."

Man! thou beginnest at the wrong end; in that thou takest thy first rise at God's eternal counsels, and then judgest doubtfully of thine own ways. It is not for thee to begin first at heaven and then to descend to earth: this course is presumptuous and damnable. What are those secret and closed books of God's eternal decree and preordination unto thee? They are only for the eyes of him that wrote them: *The Lord knoweth them that are his.* Look, if thou wilt, upon the outer seal of those divine secrets, and read, *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity*, 2 Tim. ii. 19.

Thy way lies from earth to heaven. The revealed will of God, by which only we are to be regulated, is, "Repent, believe, obey, and thou shalt be saved: live and die in thy sins, impenitent, unbelieving, thou shalt be damned." According to this rule frame thou thy courses and resolutions: and if thou canst be so great an enemy to thine own soul, as determinately to contemn the means of salvation, and to tread wilfully in the paths of death, who can say other but thou art fair for hell?

But if thou shalt carefully use and improve those good means which God hath ordained for thy conversion, and shalt thereupon find that true grace is wrought in thy soul; that thou abhorrest all evil ways, that thou dost truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and heartily purposest and endeavourest to live holily and conscionably in this present world; thou mayest now as assuredly know thy name written in heaven as if thou hadst read it in those eternal characters of God's secret counsel. Plainly, it is not for thee to say, "I am predestinate to life: therefore, thus I shall do, and thus I shall speed:" but, contrarily, "Thus hath God wrought in me: therefore I am predestinate. Let me do well, it cannot but be well with me: *Glory, and honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good*, Rom. ii. 10. Let me do my utmost diligence to *make my calling and election sure*, 2 Pet. i. 10, I am safe, and shall be happy."

But if thou hast been miscarried to lewd courses, and hast lived as without God in the world; while thou dost so, thy case is fearful: but who allowed thee to sit judge upon thine own soul, and to pass a peremptory doom of necessary damnation upon thyself? Are not the means of grace, God's blessed ordinances, still held forth unto thee? Doth not God still graciously invite thee

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to repentance? Doth not thy Saviour stand ready with his arms spread abroad to receive thee into his bosom? And canst thou be so desperately and presumptuously merciless to thyself as to say, "I shall be damned: therefore I will sin?" Thou canst not be so wicked, but there may be a possibility of thy reclamation. While God gives thee respite, there may be hope. Be not thou so injurious to thyself as to usurp the office both of God and the devil: of God, in passing a final judgment upon thyself; of the devil, in drawing thyself into damnation. Return, therefore, O sinner, and live: break off thy sins by repentance, and be saved. But, if otherwise, know that God's decree doth neither necessitate thy sin nor thy damnation: thou mayest thank thyself for both: *Thy perdition is of thyself, O Israel,* Hosea xiii. 9.

Vth TEMPTATION—"Why wilt thou be singular amongst and above thy neighbours, to draw needless censures upon thyself? Be wise, and do as the most. Be not so over-squeamish as not to dispense with thy conscience in some small matters. Lend a lie to a friend; swallow an oath for fear; be drunk, sometimes, for good-fellowship; falsify thy word for an advantage; serve the time; frame thyself to all companies. Thus thou shalt be both warm and safe, and kindly respected"—*Repelled.*

Plausible tempter, what care wouldest thou seem to take of my ease and reputation, that in the mean time thou mightest run away with my soul!

Thou persuadest me not to be singular amongst my neighbours; it shall not be my fault if I be so. If my neighbours be good and virtuous, I am with and for them; let me be hissed at, to go alone: but if otherwise, let me rather go upright alone than halt with company.

Thou tellest me of censures; They are spent in vain, that would dishearten me from good or draw me into evil. I am too deep-rooted in my resolutions of good than to be turned up by every slight wind. I know who it is that hath said, *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my name's sake,* Matt. v. 11. Let men take leave to talk their pleasure; in what I know I do well, I am censure-proof.

Thou biddest me be wise, and do as the most; These two

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cannot agree together. Not to follow the most, but the best, is true wisdom. My Saviour hath told me, that *many go in the broad way, which leadeth to destruction*, Matthew vii. 13; and it is the charge of God, *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil*, Exod. xxiii. 2. While I follow the guidance of my God, I walk confidently; as knowing I cannot go amiss: as for others, let them look to their own feet; they shall be no guides of mine.

Thou biddest me dispense with my conscience in small matters; I have learnt to call nothing small that may offend the majesty of the God of heaven. Dispensations must only proceed from a greater power; only God is greater than my conscience; where he dispenseth not, it were a vain presumption for me to dispense with myself.

And what are those small matters wherein thou solicitest my dispensation?

To lend a lie to a friend? Why dost thou not persuade me to lend him my soul? yea, to give it unto thee for him? It is a sure word of the Wise Man, "The mouth that lieth slayeth the soul," Wisd. i. 11. How vehement a charge hath the God of truth laid upon me to avoid this sin, which thou, the father of lies, wouldest draw me unto! Lev. xix. 11. What marvel is it if each speak for his own? He who is *truth* itself, and *loveth truth in the inward parts*, John xiv. 6; Ps. li. 6, justly calls for it in the tongue; *Laying aside lying*, saith the Spirit of God, *speak every man truth with his neighbour*, Eph. iv. 25; Col. iii. 9. Thou, who art a lying spirit, wouldest be willing to advance thine own brood under the fair pretence of friendship. But what? shall I, to gratify a friend, make God mine enemy? shall I, to rescue a friend from danger, bring destruction upon myself? *Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing*, saith the Psalmist, Ps. v. 6. *Without shall be every one that loveth or maketh lies*, Rev. xxii. 15. If therefore my true attestation may avail my friend, my tongue is his; but if he must be supported by falsehood, my tongue is neither his nor mine, but is his that made it.

To swallow an oath for fear? No, tempter! I can let down no such morsels; an oath is too sacred and too awful a thing for me to put over, out of any outward respects against my conscience. If I swear, the oath is not mine, it is God's; and the revenge will be his, whose the offence is, Exod. xxii. 11; Ezek. xvi. 59. It is a charge to be trembled at; *Ye shall not swear by my name falsely*,

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neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the Lord, Levit. xix. 12. And if the word of charge be so dreadful, what terror shall we find in the word of judgment! Lo! God swears too; and because there is no greater to swear by, he swears by himself; *As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant which he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head,* Ezek. xvii. 19. It was one of the words that were delivered in fire and smoke, and thunder and lightning, in Sinai; *The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain,* Exod. xx. 7. I dare not therefore fear any thing so much as the displeasure of the Almighty; and (to die for) will neither take an unlawful oath nor violate a just one.

As for that sociable excess whereto thou temptest me, however the commonness of the vice may have seemed to abate of the reputation of heinousness in the opinion of others, yet to me it representeth it so much more hateful; as an universal contagion is more grievous than a local. I cannot purchase the name of good fellowship with the loss of my reason or with the price of a curse. Daily experience makes good that word of Solomon, that *wine is a mocker,* Prov. xx. 1: robbing a man of himself, and leaving a beast in his room. And what woes do I hear denounced against those *that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue till night, till the wine inflame them!* Isa. v. 11. If any man think he may pride himself in a strong brain and a vigorous body; *Woe to them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drinks,* ver. 22. Let the jovialists of the world *drink wine in bowls,* (Amos vi. 6,) and feast themselves without fear; let me never join myself with that fellowship where God is banished from the company.

Wouldest thou persuade me to falsify my word for an advantage? what advantage can be so great as the conscience of truth and fidelity? That man is for God's tabernacle *that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not,* Ps. xv. 4. Let me rather lose by honesty, than gain by falsehood and perfidiousness.

Thou biddest me serve the time: So I will do, while the time serves not thee; but if thou shalt have so corrupted the time, that *the whole world is set in wickedness,* (1 John v. 19.) I will serve my God in opposing it. Gladly will I serve the time in all good offices that may tend to rectify it; but to serve it in a way of flattery, I hate and scorn.

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I shall willingly frame myself to all companies; not for a partnership in their vice, but for their reclamation from evil, or encouragement in good. The Chosen Vessel hath by his example taught me this charitable and holy pliableness; *Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself a servant unto all, that I might gain the more. To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some,* 1 Cor. ix. 19–22. My only scope shall be spiritual gain: for this will I, like some good merchant, traffick with all nations, with all persons. But for carnal respects, to put myself, like the first matter, into all forms; to be demure with the strictly severe, to be debauched with the drunkard, with the atheist profane, with the bigot superstitious; what were this but to give away my soul to every one, save to the God that owns it; and while I would be all, to be nothing, and to profess an affront to him that hath charged me, *Be not conformed to this world,* Rom. xii. 2.

Shortly, let me be despicable and starve and perish in my innocent integrity, rather than be warm and safe and honoured upon so evil conditions.

VIth TEMPTATION—"It is but for a while that thou hast to live; and when thou art gone, all the world is gone with thee: improve thy life to the best contentment: take thy pleasure while thou mayest"—*Repelled.*

Even this was the very note of thine old Epicurean clients; *Let us eat and drink; for to morrow we shall die,* 1 Cor. xv. 32. I acknowledge the same dart, and the same hand that flings it: a dart dipped in that deadly poison, that causeth the man to die laughing; a dart that pierceth as deeply into the sensual heart as it is easily retorted by the regenerate.

These wild inferences of sensuality are for those that know no heaven, no hell: but to me that know this world to be nothing but a thoroughfare to eternity either way, they abhor, not from grace only, but from reason itself. In the intuition of this immortality, what wise man would not rather say, "My life is short,

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therefore it must be holy? I shall not live long, let me live well. So let me live for a while, that I may live for ever?"

These have been still the thoughts of gracious hearts. Moses, the man of God, after he hath computed the short periods of our age, and confined it to fourscore years, (so *soon is it cut off, and we fly away,*) infers, with the same breath, *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom*, Ps. xc. 10, 12; as implying, that this holy arithmetic should be an introduction to divinity; that the search of heavenly wisdom should be the true use of our short life. And the sweet singer of Israel after he hath said, *Behold, thou hast made my days as a span long; mine age is nothing to thee*, finds cause to look up from earth to heaven; *And now, Lord, what wait I for? surely my hope is even in thee*, Ps. xxxix. 5, 7. He that desired to know the measure of his life, finds it but a span; and recompenses the shortness of his continuance with hopes everlasting. As the tender mercy of our God pities our frailty, remembering that we are but *flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again*, Ps. lxxviii. 39: so our frailty supports itself with the meditation of his blessed eternity; *My days*, saith the Psalmist, *are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass. But thou, O Lord, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance to all generations*, Ps. cii. 11, 12.

As, therefore, every man walketh in a vain shadow, in respect of his transitoriness; so the good man, in respect of his holy conversation, can say, *I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living*, Ps. cxvi. 9: and knows himself made for better ends than vain pleasure: *I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord*, Ps. cxviii. 17. It is for them, *who have their portion in this life*, who have made their belly their god, and the world their heaven, Ps. xvii. 14, to place their felicity in these carnal delights: God's secret ones enjoy their higher contentments: *Thy lovingkindness is better than life*, saith the prophet, Ps. lxiii. 3. *Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than* (they had) *in the time that their corn and their wine increased*, Ps. iv. 7.

Miserable worldlings, who *walk in the vanity of their minds, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts: who being past feeling have given themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness*, Eph. iv. 17, 18, 19. What wonder is it, if, as their life is merely brutish, so the happiness that

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they affect is no other than beastial? and if they snatch at those vanishing shadows of pleasure which a poor momentary life can afford them?

According to the improvement of our best faculties so is our felicity. The best faculty of brute creatures is their sense: they therefore seek their happiness in the delectation of their senses. Man's best faculty is reason; he places his happiness, therefore, in the delights of the mind, in the perfection of knowledge, and height of speculation. The Christian's best faculty is faith: his felicity, therefore, consists in those things which are not perceptible by sense; not fathomable by reason, but apprehensible by his *faith*, which *is the evidence of things not seen*, (Heb. xi. 1.) either by the eye of sense or reason.

And as his felicity so is his life, spiritual; *To me to live is Christ*, saith he that was rapt into the third heaven, Phil. i. 21. *I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*, Gal. ii. 20. *Our life is hid with Christ in God;* and, *when Christ, which is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory*, Col. iii. 3, 4.

Lo, then, when the worldling dies, his life dies with him; and to him the world is gone with both: but when I die to nature, I have a life that lives still; a life that cannot die, a life that both is and makes me glorious.

It is not for me, therefore, to hunt after these unsatisfying and momentary pleasures, which perish in their use, and shut up in repentance; but to lay up those sure comforts which shall never have an end, but after this transitory life shall accompany me to eternity.

Tell not me, therefore, of taking my full scope to the pleasures of sin. I know there is an hell, and I look for a heaven. Upon this short moment of my life depends everlastingness.

Let me therefore be careful so to bestow this short life as that I may be sure to avoid eternity of torments, and to lay up for eternity of blessedness.

VIIth TEMPTATION—"It is for common wits to walk in the plain road of opinions. If thou wouldest be eminent amongst men, leave the beaten track, and tread in new paths of thine own; neither let it content thee to guide thy steps by the dim lanterns of the ancient: he is nobody that hath not new lights, either to hold out or follow"—*Repelled.*

Wicked tempter! I know thou wouldest have me go any ways

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save good. Were those new ways right, thou wouldest never persuade me to walk in them. Now I have just reason to misdoubt and shun those paths which thou invitest me unto, both as private and as new.

It is enough that they are my own; for canst thou think to bring me to believe myself wiser than the whole Church of God? Who am I, that I should over-know, not the present world of men only, but the eminent saints and learned doctors of all former ages? Why should I not rather suspect my own judgment than oppose theirs? When the Church, in that heavenly marriage-song, inquires of the great Shepherd of our souls, *Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?* Cant. i. 7; she receives answer, *If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents*, ver. 8. Lo, the tracks of the flock and the tents of the shepherds are my direction to find my Saviour; if I turn aside, I miss him and lose myself.

It is more than enough, that those ways are new; for truth is eternal, and that is therefore most true that comes nearest to eternity: as, contrarily, novelty is a brand of falsehood and error; *Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls*, Jer. vi. 16. Far be it from me then, that I should be guilty of that contempt whereof the prophet with the same breath accuseth his Jews: *But they said, We will not walk therein.* It is a fearful word that I hear from the mouth of the same prophet; *Because my people have forgotten me, and have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, in a way not cast up; I will scatter them as with an east wind before the enemy; I will shew them the back, and not the face, in the day of their calamity*, Jer. xviii. 15, 17.

Woe is me for these heavy times! wherein it is not the least part of our sin, nor the least cause of our miseries, that we have stumbled from the ancient paths into the untrodden ways of schism and error, and find not the face, but the back of our God turned to us in this day of our calamity. O God, thou art just; we cannot complain, that have made ourselves miserable.

It is true, where our forefathers have manifestly started aside like a broken bow, and having *corrupted their ways*, Gen. vi. 12,

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have burnt incense to vanity, Jer. xviii. 15, we must be so far from making their precedent a warrant for our imitation, as that we hear God say to us, *Be ye not like unto your fathers,* 2 Chron. xxx. 7: *Walk not in the statutes of your forefathers, neither observe their judgments,* Ezek. xx. 18: *For those that turn aside to crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity,* Ps. cxxv. 5. But where we see them *walk with a right foot,* Gal. ii. 14, in the holy ways of God, and continue steadfastly *in the faith which was once delivered to the saints,* Jude 3, we have reason to be *followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises,* Heb. vi. 12; that, walking in their ways, we may attain to their end, the salvation of our souls.

Let me see those steps wherein the holy prophets have trod; those wherein the blessed apostles have traced the prophets; those wherein the primitive fathers and martyrs have followed the apostles; those wherein the godly and learned doctors of the succeeding ages have followed those primitive fathers; and if I follow not them, let me wander and perish. It is for true men to walk in the king's highway: thieves and suspected persons cross over through by-paths, and make way where they find none.

Thou tellest me of new lights: I ask whence they rise. I know who it was that said, *I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life,* John viii. 12; xii. 46: and I know *that light was the true light,* (John i. 8, 9.) of whom holy David spake long before, *Thou art my lamp, O Lord: and the Lord will lighten my darkness,* 2 Sam. xxii. 29: *and in thy light shall we see light,* Ps. xxxvi. 9. Those that do truly hold forth this light shall be my guides; and I shall follow them with all confidence, and shall find *the path of the just as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day,* Prov. iv. 18. As for any new light that should now break forth *and shine upon our ways,* Job xxii. 28, certainly it is but *darkness,* Luke xi. 35; such a light as Bildad prophesied of long ago: *The light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine. The light shall be darkness in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him,* Job xviii. 5, 6: so as the seduced followers of these new lights may have just cause to take up that complaint of the prophet, *We wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the*

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wall like the blind: we stumble at noon day as in the night, Isa. lix. 9, 10. Shortly, then, that light which the Father of lights hath held forth in his will revealed in his word, as it hath been interpreted by his holy Church in all ages, shall be my guide, till I shall see as I am seen: as for any other lights, they are but as those wandering fires that appear in damp marshes, which lead the traveller into a ditch.

VIIIth TEMPTATION—"Pretend religion, and do any thing: what face is so foul as that mask will not cleanly cover? Seem holy, and be what thou wilt"—*Repelled.*

Yea, there thou wouldest have me. This is that deadly dart wherewith thou hast slain millions of souls. Hence it is that the Mahometan saints may commit public filthiness with thanks; hence, that corrupt Christians bury such abominable crimes in their cowls; hence, that false professors shroud so much villainy under the shelter of piety; hence, that the world abounds with so many sheep without, wolves within, Matt. vii. 15; fair tombs, full of inward rottenness, Matt. xxiii. 27; filthy dunghills, covered over with snow; rich hearse-clothes, hiding ill-scented carcasses; broken *potsherds, covered with silver dross,* Prov. xxvi. 23: hence, that the adversaries of Judah offer to Zerubbabel their aid in building the temple, Ezra iv. 2; the harlot hath her peace offerings, Prov. vii. 14; Absalom hath his vow to pay, 2 Sam. xv. 7, 8; Herod will worship the infant, Matt. ii. 8; Judas hath a kiss for his Master, Matt. xxvi. 49; Simon Magus will be a convert, Acts viii. 13; Ananias and Sapphira will part with all, Acts v. 1, 2; the angel of the church of Sardis will pretend to live, Rev. iii. 1; the beast hath horns like a lamb, but speaks like a dragon, Rev. xiii. 11; in a word, the wickedest of men will counterfeit saints, and false saints are very devils.

For so much more eminent as the virtue is which they would seem to put on, so much the more odious is the simulation both to God and man: now the most eminent of all virtues is holiness, whereby we both come nearest unto God, and most resemble him, 1 Pet. i. 16; Levit. xi. 44; xix. 2.

Of all creatures, therefore, out of hell, there is none so loathsome to God as the hypocrites; and that upon a double provocation, both for doing of evil, and for doing evil under a colour of good. The face that the wicked man sets upon his sin is worse than the sin itself: *Bring no more vain oblations,* saith the Lord: *incense*

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is an abomination to me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble to me; I am weary to bear them, Isa. i. 13, 14.

How fain wouldest thou therefore draw me into a double condemnation! both for being evil and seeming good; both which are an abomination to the Lord. Do I not hear him say, *Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me; therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work amongst this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of the wise shall perish?* Isa. xxix. 13, 14. Do I not hear him say, by his prophet Jeremiah, *They will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth. Their tongue is an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his neighbour with his mouth, but in heart he layeth his wait. Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged of such a nation as this?* Jer. ix. 5, 8, 9.

Indeed, this is the way to beguile the eyes of men like ourselves; for who would mistrust a mortified face? an eye and hand lift up to heaven? a tongue that speaks holy things? But when we have to do with a searcher of hearts, what madness is it to think there can be any wisdom or understanding or counsel against the Lord! *Woe be to them therefore that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?* Isa. xxix. 15. *Woe be to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin*, ch. xxx. 1.

Shall I then *cleanse the outside of the cup*, while I am *within full of extortion and excess?* Matt. xxiii. 25. Shall I *fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness?* Isa. lviii. 4. Shall I, *under pretence of long prayers, devour widows' houses?* Matt. xxiii. 14. Shall I put on thy form, and *transfigure* myself *into an angel of light?* 2 Cor. xi. 14. Shall not the all-seeing eye of the righteous God find me out in my damnable simulation? Hath not he said, and will make it good, *Though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap; yet thine iniquity is marked before me?* Jer. ii. 22. Hath not my Saviour, who shall be our Judge, said, *Therefore thou shalt*

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receive the greater damnation? Matt. xxiii. 14. Can there be any heavier doom that can fall from that awful mouth than, "Receive thy portion with hypocrites?"

Let those therefore that are ambitious of an higher room in hell, maintain *a form of godliness*, and *deny the power of it*, 2 Tim. iii. 5: face wickedness with piety: stalk under religion for the aims of policy: juggle with God and the world: case a devil with a saint; and row towards hell while they look heavenward.

For me, *all the while my breath is in me, and the spirit which God gives me is in my nostrils, I shall walk in mine uprightness*, Job xxvii. 3; Ps. xxvi. 11. *All false ways*, and false semblances, *shall my soul utterly abhor*, Ps. cxix. 128, that so, at the parting, my *rejoicing may be the testimony of* my *conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God*, I *have had* my *conversation in the world*, 2 Cor. i. 12.

IXth TEMPTATION—"Why shouldest thou lose any thing of thy height? Thou art not made of common mould: neither art thou as others. If thou knowest thyself, thou art more holy, more wise, better gifted, more enlightened than thy neighbours. Justly, therefore, mayest thou overlook the vulgar of Christians with pity, contempt, censure; and bear thyself as too good for ordinary conversation, go apart, and avoid the contagion of common breath"—*Repelled.*

If pride were thy ruin, wicked spirit, how fain wouldest thou make it mine also! This was thy first killing suggestion to our first parents in paradise, soon after thine own fall, as if it had been lately before thy own case, *Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil*, Gen. iii. 5. That which thou foundest so deadly to thyself thou art enviously willing to feoff upon man; that if through thy temptation pride may *compass him about as a chain*, (Ps. lxxiii. 6,) he may bear thee company in those everlasting chains wherein thou art *reserved under darkness to the judgment of the great day*, Jude 6.

Thou well knowest that the ready way to make me odious unto God is to make me proud of myself. *Pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, doth he hate*, Prov. viii. 13. *The day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty*, saith the prophet; Isaiah ii. 12. *He hath scattered the proud in the ima-*

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ginations of their hearts, saith the blessed Virgin, Luke i. 51. *God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble*, saith the apostle, James iv. 6; 1 Pet. v. 5. *The Lord will destroy the house of the proud*, saith Solomon, Prov. xv. 25; and his father David before him, *Thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayest bring them down*, 2 Sam. xxii. 28; down indeed, even to the bottom of that pit of perdition. Make me but proud, therefore, and I am thine: sure I am God will not own me; and if I could be in heaven with this sin, would cast me down headlong into hell, Isaiah xiv. 12.

Thou biddest me not to lose any thing of my height:—Alas, poor wretched dwarf that I am! what height have I? If I have but grace enough to know and bewail my own misery and nothingness, it is the great mercy of my God: *Who maketh me to differ from another? and what have* I, *that* I *have not received? and if* I *have received it, why should* I *glory in it as* my own? 1 Cor. iv. 7. Whatsoever thou persuadest me, let me rather lose of my height than add to my stature and affect too high a pitch. That humility is rewarded with honour, this pride with ruin. It is the word of Truth himself, *Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted*, Matt. xxiii. 12; Luke xiv. 11; xviii. 14. The way then to lose my whole height, yea my being, is, to be lifted up in and above myself; for though I should build my nest as high as the eagle, or advance a throne among the stars; yet how soon shall he cast me down into the dust; yea, without my repentance, into the nethermost hell!

Thou tellest me that, which the Pharisee said of himself, *I am not as others;* true: for I can say with the Chosen Vessel, that *I am the chief of sinners.*

Thou wouldest bring me into an opinion that I am more holy and more wise than my neighbours:—I am a stranger to other men's graces: I am acquainted with my own wants: yea, I so well know my own sinfulness and folly, that I hang down my head in a just shame for both. I know that he who was holier than I, could say, *I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing*, Rom. vii. 18; and he that was wiser than I, could say, *Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy*, Prov. xxx. 2, 3. All the holiness that I have attained unto is, to see and lament my defects of holiness;

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and all my wisdom is to descry and complain of my own ignorance and foolishness.

Am I better gifted than another?—Thou art an ill judge of either, who enviest the gifts of both. But if I be so, they are gifts still: and such gifts as the donor hath not absolutely given away from himself to me, but hath given, or lent them rather, to me, for an improvement to his own use; which I have no more reason to be proud of than the honest factor of his master's stock; received by him, not for possession, but for traffick.

Am I more enlightened than others?—The more do I discern my own darkness, and the more do I find cause to be humbled under the sense of it. But if the greater light, which thou sayest is in me, were not of an human imagination, but of divine irradiation, what more reason should I have to be proud of it, than that, in this more temperate clime, I have more sunshine than those of Lapland and Finland, and the rest of those more northern nations? So much the more reason have I to be thankful, none to be proud.

Why should I, therefore, overlook the meanest of my fellow-Christians; who may, perhaps, have more interest in God than myself? for it is not our knowledge that so much endears us to God as our affections. Perhaps he that knows less may love more; and if he had been blessed with my means would have known more. Neither is it the distribution of the talents that argues favour, but the grace to employ them to the benefit of the Giver: if he that received the one talent had gained another, he had received more thanks than he that upon the receipt of five talents had gained one. The Spirit breathes where it listeth, and there may lie secret graces in the bosom of those who pass for common Christians, that may find greater acceptation in heaven than those whose profession makes a fairer ostentation of holiness.

I can pity, therefore, those that are ignorant and apparently graceless; but for those that profess both to know and love Christ, while their lives deny not the power of godliness, I dare not spend upon them either my contempt or censure; lest while I judge wrongfully, I be justly judged: much less dare I separate myself from their communion, as contagious.

Thou knowest how little it were to thine advantage, that I should be persuaded to depart from the tents of the notoriously wicked, and to *have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of*

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darkness, Numb. xvi. 20, 21; 2 Cor. vi. 17; Eph. v. 11: as too well understanding, that *evil conversation corrupts good manners,* 1 Cor. xv. 33, and that a participation in sin draws on a partnership in judgment, Num. xvi. 26.

Neither know I whether thou shouldest gain more by my joining with evil society or my separating from good: infection follows upon the one, distraction upon the other.

Those, then, which cast off their communion with Christ and his Church, whether in doctrine or practice, I shall avoid as the plague, soon and far: but those who truly profess a real conjunction with that Head and this body, into their secret let my soul come, and unto their assembly let mine honour be united. But if, where I find weakness of grace and involuntary failings of obedience, I shall say, *Stand by thyself, come not near me, for I am holier than thou,* Isa. lxv. 5, how can I make other account, than that this pride shall be a smoke in the nostrils of the Almighty, a fire that burneth all day? and that he will recompense it into my bosom?

Shortly, I know none so fit to depart from as from myself; my own pride, self-love, and the rest of my inbred corruptions; and am so far from overlooking others, that I know none worse than myself.

Xth TEMPTATION—"However the zeal of your scrupulous preachers is wont to make the worst of every thing, and to damn the least slip to no less than hell; yet there are certain favourable temperaments of circumstances, which may (if not excuse, yet) extenuate a fault: such as age, complexion, custom, profit, importunity, necessity; which are justly pleadable at the bar both of God and the conscience, and are sufficient to rebate the edge of divine severity"—*Repelled.*

Wicked tempter! I know there is nothing upon earth that so much either troubles thee, or impairs thy kingdom of darkness, as the zeal of conscionable preachers; those who *lift up* their *voice like a trumpet, and show* God's *people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sin,* Isaiah lviii. 1. This is it that rescues millions of souls from the hand of hell, and gives thee so many foils in thy spiritual assaults. This godly and faithful zeal represents men's sins to them as they are; and, by sins, the danger of their damnation; which thy malicious subtlety would fain blanch over and palliate to their destruction. But when thou hast

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all done, it is not in their power to make sin worse than it is, or in thine to make it better.

As for those favourable temperaments which thou mentionest, they are mere pandarisms of wickedness, fair visors of deformity.

For to cast a glance upon each of them:—

Age is not a more common plea than unjust. The young man pretends it for his wanton and inordinate lust; the old, for his grippleness, techiness, loquacity: all wrongfully, and not without foul abuse. Youth is taught by thee to call for a swing, and to make vigour and heat of blood a privilege for a wild licentiousness; for which it can have no claim, but from a charter sealed in hell: I am sure that God who gives this marrow to his bones, and brawn to his arms, and strength to his sinews, and vivacity to his spirits, looks for another improvement; *Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth*, saith Solomon, Eccl. xii. 1; and his father before him, *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto, according to thy word*, Psalm cxix. 9: lo, the young man's ways are foul with lusts and distempered passions, and they must be cleansed; and the way to cleanse them is attendance (not of his own vain pleasures, but) of the holy ordinances of his Maker; thou wouldest have him run loose like the wild ass in the desert: God tells him, *It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth*, Lam. iii. 27; even the yoke of the divine precepts, the stooping whereunto is the best and truest of all freedoms: so as he may be able to say with the best courtier[a] of the wickedest king, *I, thy servant, fear the Lord from my youth*; the aberrations from which holy laws of God are so far from finding an excuse from the prime of our years, as that holy Job cries out of them in the bitterness of his soul, *Thou hast made me to possess the iniquities of my youth*, Job xiii. 26; and as David vehemently deprecates God's anger for them, *Remember not, Lord, the sins of my youth*, Psalm xxv. 7, so Zophar, the Naamathite, notes it for an especial brand of God's judgment upon the wicked man, that *his bones are full of the sins of his youth*, Job xx. 11; and God declares it as an especial mercy to his people, *Thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth*, Isaiah liv. 4; the more headstrong therefore my youth is, the more strait shall I curb it and hold it in; and the more vigorous it is, so much the fitter it is to be consecrated to that God who is most worthy to be served with the best of his own. As for old age, it hath, I grant,

[a] Obadiah in 1 Kings xviii. 12.

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its humours and infirmities; but rather for our humiliation than for our excuse: it is not more common than absurd and unreasonble, that when we are necessarily leaving the world we should be most fond in holding it; when we are ceasing to have any use of riches, then to endeavour most eagerly to get them; when we should be laying up treasure in heaven, to be treasuring up wrath for ourselves, and bags for we know not whom; to be unwilling to spend what we cannot keep, and to be mad on getting what we have not the wit or grace to spend: if then thou canst persuade any man to be so graceless as to make his vicious disposition an apology for wickedness, let him plead the faults of his age for the excuse of his avarice: as for morosity of nature and garrulity of tongue, they are not the imperfections of the age, but of the persons: there are meek spirits under gray hairs and wrinkled skins; there are old men who, as that wise heathen said of old, can keep silence even at a feast: he hath ill spent his age that hath not attained to so good an hand over himself, as, in some meet measure, to moderate both his speech and passion.

If some complexions both incline us more and crave indulgence to some sins more than other, (the sanguine to lust, the choleric to rage, &c.) wherefore serves grace but to correct them? If we must be overruled by nature, what do we professing Christianity? Neither humours nor stars can necessitate us to evil. While thou therefore pretendest my natural constitution, I tell thee of my spiritual regeneration; the power whereof, if it have not mortified my evil and corrupt affections, I am not what I profess to be, a Christian.

The strongest plea for the mitigation of sin is custom; the power whereof is wont to be esteemed so great as that it hath seemed to alter the quality of the fact, and of sin to make no sin. Hence the holy patriarchs admitted many consorts into their marriage-bed without the conscience of offending, which, if it had not been for the mediation of custom, had been justly esteemed no better than criminous. But however where is no contrary injunction, custom may so far usurp as to take upon it to be no less than a law itself; yet where there is a just regulation of law the plea of custom is so quite out of countenance as that it is strongly retorted against itself; neither is there any more powerful reason for the abolition of an ill use than that it is a custom; so much the more need therefore to be opposed and reformed. Hence was that vehement charge of God to his Israel; *After the doings*

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of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwell, shall ye not do: and, after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk after their ordinances, Lev. xviii. 3. *Ye shall keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the Lord your God,* ver. 30. It is too true that the bonds of custom are so strong and close, that they are not easily loosed; insomuch as custom puts on the face of another nature: *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil,* Jer. xiii. 23. How stiffly did the men of Judah, after all the dreadful threatenings of the prophet, hold to their idolatrous customs which they had learnt in Egypt! *We will burn incense to the queen of heaven, and pour out drink-offerings to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem,* Jer. xliv. 17. It is with ill customs as with diseases, which if they grow inveterate are so much the harder to be cured; but shall I therefore hug my malady because I have long had it? because it will not part away with ease? Shall I bid a thief welcome because he had wont to rob me? Shortly, then, so far is an ill custom from extenuating my sin as that it aggravates it; neither shall I offend the less because I offend with more; but rather double it, both as in my act and as in my imitation, in following others amiss and in helping to make up an ill precedent for others following of me.

As for the profit that may accrue by sinning, let those carnal hearts value it that have made the world their god: to me, the greatest gain this way is loss. Might I have that *housefull of gold and silver,* that Balaam talked of, Num. xxiv. 13; or *all* those *kingdoms of the earth, and the glory of them,* which thou showedst to my Saviour; what are all these to the price of a sin, when they meet with a man that hath learnt from the mouth of Christ, *What profit shall it be to a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* Matt. xvi. 26; Mark viii. 36.

Importunity is wont to be a prevalent suitor. How many have been dragged to hell by the force of others' solicitations, who never else meant to have trod in those paths of death! What marvel is it if that which moved the unjust judge to do right against the bent of his will, be able to draw the weak sinner awry? But if, in these earthly angariations, one mile, according to our

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Saviour's counsel, may bring on another, Matt. v. 41, yet in spiritual evil ways no compulsion can prevail upon a resolved spirit. It is not the change of stations, nor the building of twice seven altars, nor the sacrificing of seven bullocks and seven rams, that can win a true prophet of God to curse Israel, Num. xxiii. 4, 29. The Christian heart is fixed upon sure grounds of his own, never to be removed. If therefore his father sue to him; if his mother weep and wring and kneel and beseech him by the womb that bore him, and the breasts that gave him suck; if his crying children cling about his knees and crave his yieldance to some advantageous evil, or his declining some bitter sufferings for the cause of Christ; he can shake them off with an holy neglect, and say, *What do you weeping and breaking my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die for the name of the Lord Jesus*, Acts xxi. 13. *None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy*, Acts xx. 24. And if any soul be so weak as to be led rather by the earnest motions of others than by his own settled determinations, he shall find no other ease before the tribunal of heaven than our first parents did in shifting the guilt of their sin, the man to the woman, the woman to the serpent. In the mean while, that word shall ever stand with me inviolable, *My son, if sinners entice thee consent thou not*, Prov. i. 10.

Lastly, what can be the necessity which may either induce to sin or excuse for sinning? What can the world do to make me say I must do evil? Loss, restraint, exile, pain, death are the worst that either malice can do or patience suffer. These may put me hard to the question; but when all is done, they must leave me free either to act or endure. I need not therefore sin, since there is a remedy against sin,—suffering.

It is true that we are in the hands of a most gracious and indulgent God, who considers what we are made of, pities our infirmities, and knows to put a difference betwixt wilful rebellion and weak revolt. His mercy can distinguish of offenders, but his justice hath said, *Without shall be the fearful.* Finally, then, howsoever these circumstantial temperaments may receive pardon after the fact for the penitent at the mercy-seat of heaven, yet none of them can be pleadable at the bar of Divine justice; and if any sinner shall hearten himself to offend, out of the hopes and confidence of these favourable mitigations, the comfort that I can give him is, that he may howl in hell with thee for his presumption.

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RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS

OF

DIVERS PRACTICAL CASES

OF

CONSCIENCE,

IN CONTINUAL USE AMONGST MEN.

IN FOUR DECADES.

BY JOS. HALL, BISHOP OF NORWICH.

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I have perused these Four Decades of Practical Cases of Conscience with much satisfaction and delight; and find them to be, in respect of their subject matter, so profitable, necessary, and daily useful; and so piously, learnedly, and judiciously discussed and resolved, that they seem unto me best, though they come last, like the wine in the marriage-feast made sacred by Christ's divine presence and miracle; and therefore do well deserve, amongst many other the divine dishes and delicacies wherewith this right reverend, pious, and learned author hath plenteously furnished a feast for the spiritual nourishment and comfortable refreshing of God's guests, both the approbation and commendation of all, and myself amongst the rest, though unworthy to pass my censure on such a subject:—

JOHN DOWNAME.

TO THE READER.

Of all divinity, that part is most useful which determines cases of conscience; and of all cases of conscience, the practical are most necessary, as action is of more concernment than speculation; and of all practical cases, those which are of most common use are of so much greater necessity and benefit to be resolved, as the errors thereof are more universal, and therefore more prejudicial to the society of mankind.

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These I have selected out of many; and having turned over divers casuists have pitched upon these decisions, which I hold most conformable to enlightened reason and religion. Sometimes I follow them, and sometimes I leave them for a better guide.

In the handling of all which, would I have affected that course which Seneca blames in his Albutius, to say all that might be spoken, I could easily have been more voluminous, though perhaps not more satisfactory.

If these lines meet with different judgments, I cannot blame either myself or them. It is the opinion of some Schoolmen, which seems to be made good by that instance in the prophet Daniel[a], that even the good angels themselves may holily vary in the way, though they perfectly meet in the end. It is far from my thoughts to obtrude these my resolutions, as peremptory and magisterial, upon my readers; I only tender them submissly; as probable advices to the simpler sort of Christians, and as matter of grave censure to the learned.

May that Infinite Goodness, to whose only glory I humbly desire to devote myself and all my poor endeavours, make them as beneficial as they are well meant to the good of his Church, by the unworthiest of his servants.

J. H. B. N.

Higham, near Norwich:
[First edition,] Sept. 12, 1648.

THE FIRST DECADE.

CASES OF PROFIT AND TRAFFICK.

CASE I.—"Whether is it lawful for me to raise any profit by the loan of money?"

You may not expect a positive answer either way. Many circumstances are considerable ere any thing can be determined.

First, who is it that borrows? A poor neighbour, that is constrained out of need? or a merchant, that takes up money for a freer trade? or a rich man, that lays it out upon superfluous occasions? If a poor man borrow out of necessity, you may not expect any profit for the loan, Deut. xv, 7, 8, 9: to the poorest of all we must give, and not lend; to the next rank of poor we must lend freely. But if a man will borrow that money which you could improve, for the enriching of himself, or out of a wanton expense will be laying out that which might be otherwise useful to you, for his mere pleasure, the case is different; for God hath not commanded you to love any man more than yourself; and

[a] Dan. x. 13, 20, 21; xii. 5.

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there can be no reason why you should vail your own just advantage to another man's excess.

Secondly, upon what terms do you lend? whether upon an absolute compact for a set increment, whatever become of the principal, or upon a friendly trust to a voluntary satisfaction, according to the good improvement of the sum lent? The former is not safe; and where there hath been an honest endeavour of a just benefit disappointed, either by unavoidable casualty or force, may not be rigorously urged without manifest oppression: the latter can be no other than lawful; and with those that are truly faithful and conscionable, the bond of gratitude is no less strong than that of law and justice.

Thirdly, if upon absolute compact, is it upon a certainty or an adventure? for where you are willing to hazard the principal there can be no reason but you should expect to take part of the advantage.

Fourthly, where the trade is ordinarily certain there are yet further considerations to be had; to which I shall make way by these undeniable grounds:—

That the value of moneys or other commodities is arbitrary, according to the sovereign authority and use of several kingdoms and countries:—

That whatsoever commodity is saleable is capable of a profit in the loan of it: as an horse, or an ox, being that it may be sold, may be let out for profit.

Money itself is not only the price of all commodities in all civil nations, but it is also, in some cases, a trafficable commodity; the price whereof rises and falls in several countries upon occasion, and yieldeth either profit or loss in the exchange.

There can be no doubt, therefore, but that money, thus considered, and as it were turned merchandise, may be bought and sold, and improved to a just profit.

But the main doubt is, whether money, merely considered as the price of all other commodities, may be let forth for profit, and be capable of a warrantable increase.

For the resolving whereof, be it determined,

That all usury, which is an absolute contract for the mere loan of money, is unlawful, both by law natural and positive, both divine and human.

Nature teacheth us that metals are not a thing capable of a superfœtation; that no man ought to set a price on that which is

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not his own time; that the use of the stock, once received, is not the lender's, but the borrower's; for the power and right of disposing the principal is by contract transferred for the time to the hands of him that receives it; so as he that takes the interest by virtue of such transaction, doth but in a mannerly and legal fashion rob the borrower.

How frequent the Scripture[b] is in the prohibition of this practice, no Christian can be ignorant. And as for human laws, raised even from the mere light of nature amongst heathen nations, how odious and severely interdicted usurary contracts have been in all times, it appears sufficiently by the records which we have of the decrees of Egypt[c], of Athens, of Rome: and not only by the restraint of the Twelve Tables, and of Claudius and Vespasian, but by the absolute forbiddance of many popular statutes condemning this usage. Tiberius himself, though otherwise wicked enough, yet would rather furnish the banks with his own stock, to be freely let out for three years to the citizens, upon only security of the sum doubled in the forfeiture, than he would endure this griping and oppressive transaction. And how wise Cato drove all usurers out of Sicily, and Lucullus freed all Asia from this pressure of interest, history hath sufficiently recorded.

As for laws ecclesiastical, let it be enough that a council[d] hath defined, that to say usury is not a sin is no better than heresy; and in succeeding times, how liable the usurer hath ever been to the highest censures of the Church, and how excluded from the favour of Christian burial, is more manifest than to need any proof.

Secondly; however it is unlawful to covenant for a certain profit for the mere loan of money, yet there may be and are circumstances appending to the loan, which may admit of some benefit to be lawfully made by the lender for the use of his money; and especially these two: the loss that he sustains, and the gain that he misses by the want of the sum lent. For what reason can there be, that to pleasure another man I should hurt myself? that I should enrich another by my own loss?

If then I shall incur a real loss or forfeiture by the delayed payment of the sum lent, I may justly look for a satisfaction from

[b] Exod. xxii. 25; Lev. xxv. 36, 37; Deut. xxiii. 19, 20; Nehem. v. 7; Psalm xv. 5; Prov. xxviii. 8; Ezek. xviii. 8.

[c] Vid. Alexand. ab Alexand. Gen. dierum l. i. c. 7. [Paris 1539. p. 5. b.]

[d] Concil. Viennens. [Bin. tom. iii. pars 2. p. 1493.]

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the borrower; yea, if there be a true danger of loss to me imminent when the transaction is made, nothing hinders but that I may by compact make sure such a sum as may be sufficient for my indemnity.

And if I see an opportunity of an apparent profit, that I could make fairly by disbursing of such a sum *bona fide;* and another, that hath a more gainful bargain in chase, shall sue to me to borrow my money out of my hand for his own greater advantage; there can be no reason why, in such a case, I should have more respect to his profit than my own; and why should I not, even upon pact, secure unto myself such a moderate sum as may be somewhat answerable to the gain which I do willingly forego for his greater profit? since it is a true ground which Lessius, with other casuists, maintains against Sotus and Durand, that even our hopes of an evident commodity are valuable, and that no less than the fears of our loss.

Shortly, for the guidance of our either caution or liberty in matter of borrowing or lending, the only cynosure is our charity: for in all human and civil acts of commerce it is a sure rule, that whatsoever is not a violation of charity cannot be unlawful; and whatsoever is not agreeable to charity can be no other than sinful. And as charity must be your rule, so yourself must be the rule of your charity: look what you could wish to be done to you by others, do but the same to others, you cannot be guilty of the breach of charity. The maxims of traffick are almost infinite; only charity, but ever inseparable from justice, must make the application of them. That will teach you, that every increase by loan of money is not usurary; and that those which are absolutely such are damnable: that will teach you to distinguish betwixt the one improvement of loan and the other; and will tell you, that if you can find out a way, whether by loan or sale, to advance your stock, that may be free from all oppression and extortion, and beneficial as well to others as to yourself, you need not fear to walk in it with all honest security. But in the mean time, take good heed that your heart beguile you not in misapplications; for we are naturally too apt, out of our self love, to flatter ourselves with fair glozes of bad intentions, and rather to draw the rule to us than ourselves to the rule.

But while I give you this short solution, I must profess to lament the common ignorance or mistaking of too many Christians, whose zeal justly cries down usury as a most hateful and abominable

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practice, but in the mean time makes no bones of actions no less biting and oppressive. They care not how high they sell any of their commodities, at how unreasonable rates they set their grounds, how they circumvent the buyer in their bargains; and think any price just, any gain lawful, that they can make in their markets; not considering that there is neither less, nor less odious usury in selling and letting, than there is in lending. It is the extortion in both that makes the sin; without which, the kind or terms of the transaction could not be guilty. Surely it must needs be a great weakness, to think that the same God who requires mercy and favour in lending will allow us to be cruel in selling. Rigour and excess in both equally violates the law of commutative justice, equally crosses the law of charity. Let those therefore that make scruple of an usurious lending learn to make no less conscience of a racking bargain; otherwise, their partial obedience will argue a gross hypocrisy, and they shall prove themselves the worst kind of what they hate, usurers; for in the ordinary loan-usury, the borrower hath yet time to boot for his money; but here, the buyer pays down an excessive interest, without any consideration at all but the seller's cruelty.

For the fuller clearing of which point, whereas you ask,

CASE II.—"Whether I may not sell my wares as dear as I can, and get what I may of every buyer?"—*I answer,*

There is a due price to be set upon every saleable commodity; else there were no commerce to be used among men: for if every man might set what rate he pleases upon his lands or goods, where should he find a buyer? Surely nothing could follow but confusion and want; for mere extremity must both make the market and regulate it.

The due price is that which cuts equally and indifferently betwixt the buyer and seller; so as the seller may receive a moderate gain, and the buyer a just pennyworth.

In those countries wherein there is a price set by public authority upon all marketable commodities, the way of commerce is well expedited; and it is soon and easily determined, that it is meet men should be held close to the rule.

But where all things are left to an arbitrary transaction, there were no living, if some limits were not set to the seller's demands.

These limits must be the ordinary received proportion of price, current in the several countries wherein they are sold; and the

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judgment of discreet, wise, experienced, and unconcerned persons, and the well-stated conscience of the seller.

If men shall wilfully run beyond these bounds, taking advantage of the rareness of the commodity, the paucity or the necessity of the buyers, to enhance the price to an unreasonable height, they shall be guilty of the breach of charity; and in making a sinful bargain purchase a curse..

Not that a man is so strictly tied to any other's valuation, as that he may not upon any occasion ask or receive more than the common price; or that, if the market rise, he is bound to sit still. There may be just reason, upon a general mortality of cattle, to set those beasts that remain at an higher rate; or upon a dearth of grain, or other commodities, to heighten the price; but in such cases we must be so affected as that we grudge to ourselves our own gain, that we be not in the first file of enhancers, that we strive to be the lowest in our valuation, and labour what we may to bring down the market; always putting ourselves in our conceits into the buyer's room, and bethinking how we would wish to be dealt with if we were in his clothes.

It is lawful for the seller, in his price, to have regard, not to his rents and disbursements only, but to his labour and cost, to his delay of benefit, to his loss in managing, to his hazard or difficulty in conveyance; but all these in such moderation as that he may be a just gainer by the bargain; not setting the dice upon the buyer, not making too much haste to be rich by the secret spoils of an oppressed neighbour.

Those things whose end is only pleasure or ornament, as a jewel, an hawk, or an hound, can admit of no certain value. The owner's affection must estimate it, and the buyer's desire must make up an illimited bargain: but even in these, and all other commodities that carry the face of unnecessary, conscience must be the clerk of the market, and tell us, that we must so sell as we could be willing to buy.

From all which it follows,

That the common maxim current[e] in the shops of trade, that things are so much worth as they can be sold for; and those ordinary rules of chapmen, that men who are masters of their wares may heighten their prices at pleasure, and get what they can out of all comers; and whatever they can get out of the

[e] Dom. Sot. de Justit. et Jure: l. vi. quæst. 2. Artic. 3. tradit hoc, ut Axioma Jurisconsultorum. ["tantum valet res quantum vendi potest."]

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simplicity or necessity of the buyers is lawful prize; are damnably uncharitable and unjust.

It were an happy thing if, as it is in some other well-ordered nations, there were a certain regulation of the prices of all commodities by public authority; the wisdom whereof knows how to rise and fall according to the necessity of the occasion: so as the buyer might be secured from injury, and the seller restrained from a lawless oppression. But where that cannot be had, it is fit that justice and charity should so far overrule men's actions, that every man may not be carried in matter of contract by the sway of his own unreasonable will, and be free to carve for himself as he lists of the buyer's purse. Every man hath a bird in his bosom, that sings to him another note.

A good conscience, therefore, will tell you, that if, taking advantage of the ignorance or unskilfulness of the buyer, you have made a prey of him, by drawing from him double the worth of the commodity sold, you are bound to make restitution to him accordingly; and in a proportion so, in all the considerable sums which you shall have by your false protestations and oaths and plausible intimations wrought out from an abused buyer, above that due price which would make you a just and rightly moderated gainer: for, assure yourself, all that you willingly do this way is but a better coloured picking of purses; and what you thus get is but stolen goods, varnished over with the pretence of a calling; and will prove at the last no other than gravel in your throat.

Case III.—"Whether is the seller bound to make known to the buyer the faults of that which he is about to sell?"

It is a question that was long since disputed betwixt the heathen sages, Antipater and Diogenes, as Cicero[f] informs us: with whom Cato so decides it, as that his judgment may justly shame and condemn the practice of too many Christians.

For a full answer, due consideration must be had of divers circumstances.

First, what the nature and quality of the fault is; whether it be slight and unimporting, or whether such as may vitiate the thing sold, and render it either unuseful or dangerous to the buyer; or again, whether the fault be apparent or secret.

Both these do justly vary the case.

[f] Tull. de Offic. l. iii. § 13.

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Slight and harmless faults may be concealed without injustice; main and importing must be signified.

If apparent defects be not discerned by the buyer, he may thank himself: secret faults, known only to the seller, such as may be prejudicial to the buyer, ought not to be concealed; or if they be concealed, so as that the buyer pays for it as sound and perfect, bind the seller in conscience either to void the bargain or to give just satisfaction.

Secondly, it would be considered, whether the buyer, before the bargain be stricken, hath required of the seller to signify the faults of the commodity to be sold; and out of a reliance upon the seller's fidelity and warrant hath made up the match; or whether, in the confidence of his own skill, without moving any question, he enter resolutely (*de bene esse*) upon the bargained commodity.

If the former, a double bond lies upon the seller to deal faithfully with the buyer; and therefore to let him know the true condition of the thing exposed to sale: that so, either he may take off his hand, or, if he shall see that, notwithstanding that defect, it may serve his turn, he may proportion the price accordingly: otherwise he shall be guilty, besides falsehood and oppression, of perfidiousness.

But if the buyer will peremptorily rely upon his own judgment, and, as presuming to make a gain of that bargain, which the seller, out of conscience of the imperfection, sets, as he ought, so much lower as the defect may be more disadvantageous to the buyer, will go through with the contract, and stand to all hazards, I see no reason why the seller may not receive the price stipulated: but withal, if the match may carry danger in it to the buyer; as, if the horse sold be subject to a perilous starting or stumbling; the house sold have a secret crack that may threaten ruin; or the land sold be liable to a litigious claim which may be timely avoided; the seller is bound in conscience, at least after the bargain, to intimate unto the buyer these faulty qualities, that he may accordingly provide for the prevention of the mischief that may ensue.

But if the seller shall use art to cover the defects of his commodity, that so he may deceive the buyer in his judgment of the thing bargained for, or shall mix faulty wares with sound, that they may pass undiscovered, he is more faulty than his wares, and makes an ill bargain for his soul.

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In this, shortly, and in all other cases that concern trade, these universal rules must take place.

That it is not lawful for a Christian chapman to thrive by fraud:

That he may sell upon no other terms than he could wish to buy:

That his profit must be regulated by his conscience; not his conscience by his profit:

That he is bound either to prevent the buyer's wrong, or, if heedlessly done, to satisfy it:

That he ought rather to affect to be honest than rich:

And, lastly, that, as he is a member of a community both civil and Christian, he ought to be tender of another man's indemnity no less than of his own.

Case IV.—"Whether may I sell my commodities the dearer for giving days of payment?"

There is no great difference betwixt this case and that of loan, which is formerly answered, save that there, money is let; here, commodities, money-worth: here is a sale; there a lending: in the one, a transferring of the right and command for the time; in the other, perpetually. But the substance, both of the matter and question, is the same; for in both there seems to be a valuation of time, which, whether in case of mutation or sale, may justly be suspected for unlawful.

For answer:—

There are three stages of prices acknowledged by all casuists: the highest, which they are wont to call rigorous, the mean, and the lowest. If these keep within due bounds, though the highest be hard, yet it is not unjust; and if the lowest be favourable, yet it is not always necessary.

If then you shall proportion but a just price to the time and worth of your bargain, so as the present shall pass for the easiest price, some short time for the mean, and the longer delay for the highest; I see not wherein, all things considered, you do offend.

And, certainly, to debar the contract of a moderate gain for the delay of payment upon months prefixed, were to destroy all trade of merchandise. For not many buyers are furnished with ready money to buy their wares at the port: nor could the sellers make off their commodities so seasonably as to be ready for further

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traffick, if they must necessarily be tied to wait upon the hopes of a pecuniary sale, and not left to the common liberty of putting them over to wholesale men, upon trust, who, upon a second trust, distribute them to those that vent them by retail; both for days agreed upon: by which means the trade holds up, and the commonwealth enjoys the benefit of a convenient and necessary commerce; a practice that is now so habituated amongst all nations into the course of trade, that it cannot well consist without it; so as nothing is more ordinary in experience than that those who are able to pay down ready money for their wares know to expect a better pennyworth than those that run upon trust. And there may be just reason for this difference; for the present money received enables the seller to a further improvement of his stock, which lies, for the time, dead in the hands that take day for their payment.

So, then, it is not mere time that is here set to sale, which were odious in any Christian to bargain for: but there are two incidents into this practice which may render it not unwarrantable.

The one is, the hazard of the sum agreed upon, which too often comes short in the payment; while those subordinate chapmen, into whose hand the gross sum is scattered, turn bankrupts, and forfeit their trust; so as no small loss is, this way, commonly sustained by the confident seller: in which regard we are wont to say justly, that "One bird in the hand is worth two in the wood."

The other is, the cessation of that gain which the merchant might in the mean time have made of the sum deferred; which might, in likelihood, have been greater than the proportion of the raised price can amount unto.

To which may be added, the foreseen probability of the raising of the market in the interval of payment; the profit whereof is precluded, by this means, to the seller: whose full engagement takes him off, perhaps, from a resolution to have reserved those commodities in his own hands, in expectation of an opportunity of a more profitable utterance, had not the forwardness of the buyer importuned a prevention.

Upon these considerations, if they be serious and unfeigned, I see not why you may not, in a due and moderate proportion, difference your prices according to the delays of payment, without any oppression to the buyer. Howbeit, if any man pleaseth to be

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so free as to take no notice of time, but to make future days in his account present, I shall commend his charity, though I dare not press his example as necessary.

The case is equally just on the behalf of the seller; who, if he be either driven by some emergent necessity, or drawn by the opportunity of a more gainful bargain to call for his money before his day, may justly be required by the late buyer to abate of the returnable sum, in regard of the prevention of the time covenanted; by reason of the inconvenience or loss whereunto he is put upon the sudden revocation of that money which is not by agreement payable till the expiration of the time prefixed. But what quantity is to be allowed on the one part, or defalked on the other, is only to be moderated by Christian charity, and that universal rule of doing what we would be willing to suffer.

Case V.—"Whether, and how far, monopolies are or may be lawful?"

The most famous monopoly that we find in history is that of Egypt, Gen. xli. 56, 57; wherein the provident patriarch Joseph, out of the foresight of a following dearth, bought up the seven years' grain for Pharaoh, and laid it up in public storehouses; and, in the general scarcity, sold it out to the inhabitants and strangers with no small advantage; which was so far from unlawful, as that he thereby merited the name of the Saviour of Egypt[s]. And if any worthy patriot, out of a like providence, shall beforehand gather up the commodities of his country into a public magazine, for the common benefit and relief of the people, upon the pinch of an ensuing necessity; he is so far out of the reach of censure, as that he well deserves a statue, with the inscription of "Public Benefactor." So as it is not the mere act of monopolizing that makes the thing unlawful, but the ground and intention, and the manner of carriage.

All monopolies, as they are usually practised, are either such as are allowed by sovereign authority or privately contrived by secret plot and convention, for a peculiar gain to some special persons.

If the first, it must be considered upon what reason that privilege is granted, and upon what terms. If both these be just, the grant can be no other. For first, it may not be denied that supreme authority, whether of princes or states, hath power to grant such privileges where they shall find just cause; and,

[s] So the Vulgate renders *Zaphnath Paaneah*, "*Salvator Mundi*," Gen. xli. 45.

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secondly, that there may be very just motives of granting them to some capable and worthy persons: I should be ashamed to imagine that either of these should need any probation. Doubtless, then, there is manifest equity, that where there hath been some great merit or charge or danger in the compassing of some notable work for a common good, the undertaker should be rewarded with a patent for a secured profit to himself. As put the case, some well-minded printer, as one of the Stephens, is willing to be at an excessive charge in the fair publication of a learned and useful work, for the benefit of the present and following ages; it is most just that he should, from the hands of princes or states, receive a privilege for the sole impression, that he may recover, with advantage, the deep expense he hath been at: otherwise some interloper may, perhaps, underhand fall upon the work at a lower rate, and undo the first editor; whose industry, care, and cost shall thus be recompensed with the ruin of himself and his posterity; as were too easy to instance. If a man have by notable dexterity of wit and art, and much labour and charge, after many experiments, attained to the skill of making some rare engine of excellent use for the service of his prince and country; as some singular waterwork, or some beneficial instrument for the freeing of navigable rivers from their sandy obstructions; it is all the reason in the world, that by the just bounty of princes he should be so far remunerated, as that he alone may receive a patent of enjoying a due profit of his own invention. But how far it may be lawful for a prince, not only to gratify a well-deserving subject with the fee of his own device, but with a profit arising from the sole sale of marketable commodities through his kingdom; or whether, and how far, in the want of moneys for the necessary service of his state, he may, for the public use, raise, set, or sell monopolies of that kind, is diversely agitated by casuists, and must receive answer according to the absoluteness or limitation of those governments under which they are practised; but with this, that where this is done there may be great care had of a just price to be set upon the commodities so restrained, that they be not left to the lawless will of a privileged engrosser, nor heightened to an undue rate by reason of a particular indulgence.

This may be enough for authoritative monopolies.

The common sort of offensive practices this way are private and single, or conventional and plotted by combination. The former, as when some covetous extortioner, out of the strength of his

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purse, buys up the whole lading of the ship, that he may have the sole power of the wares to sell them at pleasure, which there is no fear but he will do with rigour enough: the true judgment of which action, and the degrees of the malignity of it, must be fetched, as from the mind, so from the management of the buyer, as being so much more sinful as it partakes more of oppression. The latter, when some brethren in evil conspire to prevent the harvest, to buy up or hoard up the grain, with a purpose to starve the market and to hatch up a dearth: a damnable practice in both kinds, and that which hath of old been branded with a curse; neither less full of injustice than uncharitableness, and that which cries aloud for a just punishment and satisfactory restitution. I cannot therefore but marvel at the opinion of learned Lessius, which he fathers also upon Molina, that too favourably minces the heinousness of this sin; bearing us in hand, that it is indeed an offence against charity and common profit, but not against particular justice: his reason:—"To buy that corn," saith he, "could not be against justice, for he bought it at the current price; nor yet to sell it could be against justice, because he was not tied, out of justice, at that time to bring it forth to sale:" when he might easily have considered, that it is not the mere act of buying, or of not selling, that in itself is accused for unjust; but to buy, or not to sell, with an intention and issue of oppressing others, and undue enriching themselves by a dearth: for what can be more unjust, than for a man to endeavour to raise himself by the affamishing of others? Neither can it serve his turn to say by way of excuse, that the multitude of buyers may be the cause of a dearth, and yet without sin; since they do rather occasion than cause a scarcity, and are so far from intending a dearth in making their market, that they deprecate it as their great affliction. And if, by his own confession, those who either by force or fraud hinder the importation of corn that a dearth may continue are guilty of injustice, and are bound to make restitution, both to the commonwealth in giving cause to raise the price, as also to the merchant whom they have hindered of his meet gain; how can those be liable to a less sin or punishment, that either buy up or wilfully keep in their grain, with a purpose to begin and hold on a dearth? and what less can it be than force or fraud, that by their crafty and cruel prevention the poor are necessitated to want that sustenance whereby their life should be maintained?

Wise Solomon shall shut up this scene for me: *He that with-*

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holds corn, the people shall curse him: but blessings shall be upon the head of him that selleth it, Prov. xi. 26.

CASE VI.—"Whether, and how far, doth a fraudulent bargain bind me to performance?"

How far, in matter of law, you must advise with other counsel; but for matter of conscience, take this:—

Is the fraud actively yours, done by you to another? or else passively put by another upon you?

If the former, you are bound to repent and satisfy, either by rescinding the match or by making amends for the injury.

If the latter, wherein did the fraud lie?

If in the main substance of the thing sold, the bargain is, both by the very law of nature and in conscience, void; yea, indeed, not at all: as if a man have sold you copper lace for gold, or alchymy-plate for silver. The reason is well given by casuists[h]: there is no bargain without a consent, and here is no consent at all, while both parties pitch not upon the same subject; the buyer propounds to himself gold and silver, the seller obtrudes copper and alchymy; the one, therefore, not buying what the other pretended to sell, here is no bargain made, but a mere act of cozenage, justly liable to punishment by all laws of God and man.

But if the fraud were only in some circumstances, as in some faulty condition of the thing sold, not before discerned, or in the over-prizing of the commodity bought, the old rule is, *caveat emptor*. You must, for aught I know, hold you to your bargain. But if that faulty condition be of so high a nature that it mars the commodity and makes it useless to the buyer, the seller, being conscious of the fault, is injurious in the transaction, and is bound in conscience to make satisfaction; and if he have willingly overreached you in the price, in a considerable proportion is guilty of oppression.

It is very memorable in this kind, that Cicero[i] relates to us of a fraudulent bargain betwixt Canius, a Roman knight and orator, and one Pythius, a banker of Syracuse. Canius, coming upon occasion of pleading to the city of Syracuse, took a great liking to the place, and settling there, gave out that he had a great desire to buy some one of those pleasant gardens wherewith, it seems, that city abounded; that he might there recreate himself, when he pleased, with his friends. Pythius, a crafty merchant, hearing of

[h] Lessius [De Justitia et Jure] l. ii. c. 17. dub. 5. [i] Cicer. de Offic. l. iii. § 14.

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it, sends word to Canius that he had a fair garden which he had no mind to sell, but if he pleased to make use of it for his solace, he might command it as his own; and withal courteously invites Canius to sup with him there the day following. In the mean time, being a man by reason of his trade of exchange very gracious in the city, he calls the fishermen together, and desires them, that the next evening they would fish in the stream before his garden, and bring him what they shall have caught. Canius, in due time, comes, according to the invitation, to supper; where there was delicate provision made for him by Pythius, and store of boats bringing in their plentiful draughts of fish, and casting them down at the feet of Pythius. Canius asks the reason of this concourse of fishermen, and store of proffered provision. Pythius tells him, "this is the commodity and privilege of the place: if Syracuse yield any fish, here it is caught, and here tendered." Canius believing the report importunes his host to sell him the ground; the owner, after some seeming loathness and squeamish reluctation, at last yields to gratify him with the bargain. The dear price is paid down with much eagerness. The new master of the place, in much pride of his purchase, the next day repairs early to his garden, invites his friends to a Friday feast, and finding no boat there, asks the neighbour whether it were a holiday with the fishermen, that he saw none of them there. "No," said the good man, "none that I know: but none of the trade use to fish here, and I much marvelled at the strange confluence of their boats here yesterday." The Roman orator was down in the mouth, finding himself thus cheated by the money-changor; but for aught I see had his amends in his hands. He meant and desired to buy the place, though without any such accommodation, but overbought it, upon the false pretence of an appendant commodity. The injury was the seller's, the loss must be the buyer's.

But if such be the case, that you are merely drawn in by the fraud, and would not have bought the commodity at all if you had not been induced by the deceit and false oaths and warrants of the seller, you have just reason either, if you may, to fall off from the bargain, or, if the matter be valuable, to require a just satisfaction from the seller, who is bound in conscience, either by annulling the bargain or abatement of price, to make good your indemnity.

In these matters of contract there is great reason to distinguish betwixt a willing deceit and an involuntary wrong. If a man shall fraudulently sell an horse, which he knows secretly and in-

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curably diseased, to another for sound, and that other, believing the seller's deep protestation, shall upon the same price *bonâ fide* put him off to me, I feel myself injured; but whither shall I go for an amends? I cannot challenge the immediate seller, for he deceived me not; I cannot challenge the deceiver, for he dealt not with me. In human laws I am left remediless; but in the law of conscience the first seller, who ought to have borne his own burden of an inevitable loss, is bound to transfer, by the hands that sold me that injurious bargain, a due satisfaction.

Neither is it other in the fraudulent conveyances of houses or land. However the matter may be intricated by passing through many perhaps unknowing hands, yet the sin and obligation to satisfaction will necessarily lie at the first door; whence, if just restitution do not follow, the seller may purchase hell to boot.

Think not now on this discourse that the only fraud is in selling. There may be no less, though not so frequent fraud in buying also; whether in unjust payment by false coin or by injustice of quantities, as in buying by weights or measures above allowance, or by wrong valuation of the substance and quality of the commodity, misknown by the seller. As, for instance, a simple man, as I have known it done in the western parts, finds a parcel of ambergris cast upon the sands; he, perceiving it to be some unctuous matter, puts it to the base use of his shoes, or his cart-wheel; a merchant that smells the worth of the stuff buys it of him for a small sum, giving him a shilling or two for that which himself knows to be worth twenty pounds: the bargain is fraudulent, and requires a proportionable compensation to the ignorant seller, into whose hands Providence hath cast so rich a booty.

Shortly, in all these intercourses of trade, that old and just rule which had wont to sway the traffick of heathens must much more take place amongst Christians; *Cum bonis bene agier*[k]; "That honest men must be honestly dealt with;" and therefore that all fraud must be banished out of their markets, or, if it dares to intrude, soundly punished, and mulcted with a due satisfaction.

CASE VII.—"How far, and when, am I bound to make restitution of another man's goods remaining in my hand?"

Restitution is a duty no less necessary than rarely practised amongst Christians. The arch-publican Zacchæus knew that with this he must begin his conversion; and that known rule of St.

[k] [Inter. bonos bene agier Cic. ad Fam. L. VII. Ep. 12.]

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Austin is in every man's mouth, "No remission without restitution[1]." For this act is no small piece of commutative justice, which requires that every man should have his own: most just therefore it is that what you have taken or detained from the true owner should be restored; neither can it be sufficient that you have conceived a dry and bootless sorrow for your wrongful detention, unless you also make amends to him by a real compensation.

But you are disabled to make restitution by reason of want; your will is good, but the necessity into which you are fallen makes you uncapable of performance. See first that it be a true and not feigned necessity. Many a one, like to lewd cripples that pretend false sores, counterfeit a need that is not, and shelter themselves in a willing jail, there living merrily upon their defrauded creditor, whom they might honestly satisfy by a well improved liberty: this case is damnably unjust. But if it be a true necessity of God's making, it must excuse you for the time, till the same hand that did cast you down shall be pleased to raise you up again: then you are bound to satisfy; and in the mean time lay the case truly before your creditor, who, if he be not merciless, where he sees a real desire and endeavour of satisfaction, will imitate his God in accepting the will for the deed, and wait patiently for the recovery of your estate.

You ask now, to whom you should tender restitution:—

To whom but the owner? "But he," you say, "is dead." That will not excuse you; he lives still in his heirs. It is memorable, though in a small matter, which Seneca reports of a Pythagorean philosopher at Athens, who, having run upon the score for his shoes at a shop there, hearing that the shoemaker was dead, at first was glad to think the debt was now paid; but straight recollecting himself, he says within himself, "Yet, howsoever, the shoemaker lives still to thee, though dead to others;" and thereupon puts his money into the shop, as supposing that both of them would find an owner. It is a rare case that a man dies and leaves nobody in whom his right survives. But if there be neither heir, nor executor, nor administrator, nor assign, *The poor,* saith our Saviour, *ye shall have always with you:* make thou them his heir; turn your debt into alms.

Object. "But, alas!" you say, "I am poor myself: what need I then look forth for any other? Why may not I employ my restitution to the relief of my own necessity?"

[1] Aug. Epist. 54. ad Macedon. [Ed. Bened. 153.]

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Sol. It is dangerous, and cannot be just, for a man to be his own carver altogether in a business of this nature. You must look upon this money as no more yours than a stranger's; and howsoever it be most true that every man is nearest to himself, and hath reason to wish to be a sharer where the need is equal, yet it is fit this should be done with the knowledge and approbation of others. Your pastor, and those other that are by authority interested in these public cares, are fit to be acquainted with the case. If it be in a matter meet to be notified as a business of debt or pecuniary engagement, let their wisdom proportion the distribution; but if it be in the case of some secret crime, as of theft or cozenage, which you would keep as close as your own heart, the restitution must be charged upon your conscience, to be made with so much more impartiality as you desire it more to be concealed: herein have a care of your soul, whatever becomes of your estate.

As for the time of restitution, it is easily determined that it cannot well be too soon for the discharge of your conscience; it may be too late for the occasions of him to whom it is due. Although it may fall out that it may prove more fit to defer, for the good of both; wherein charity and justice must be called in as arbitrators. The owner calls for his money in a riotous humour, to mispend it upon his unlawful pleasure; if your delay may prevent the mischief, the forbearance is an act of mercy. The owner calls for a sword deposited with you, which you have cause to suspect he means to make use of for some ill purpose; your forbearing to restore it is so both charitable and just, that your act of delivery of it may make you accessary to a murder. Whereto I may add, that in the choice of the time you may lawfully have some respect to yourself; for if the present restitution should be to your utter undoing, which may be avoided by some reasonable delay, you have no reason to shun another's inconvenience by your own inevitable ruin: in such case, let the creditor be acquainted with the necessity his offence deprecated; and rather put yourself upon the mercy of a chancery than be guilty of your own overthrow.

But when the power is in your hand, and the coast every way clear, let not another man's goods or money stick to your fingers; and think not that your head can long lie easily upon another man's pillow.

"Yea, but," you say, "the money or goods miscarried, either

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by robbery or false trust ere you could employ them to any profit at all." This will not excuse you; after they came into your power, you are responsible for them. What compassion this may work in the good nature of the owner for the favour of an abatement must be left to his own breast: your tie to restitution is not the less; for, it is supposed, had they remained in the owner's hands they had been safe. If it were not your fault, yet it was your cross, that they miscarried; and who should bear your cross but yourself?

Shortly, then, after all pretences of excuse, the charge of wise Solomon must be obeyed: *Withhold not good from the owners thereof, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it,* Prov. iii. 27.

Case VIII.—"Whether, and how far, doth a promise, extorted by fear, though seconded by an oath, bind my conscience to performance?"

A mere promise is an honest man's strong obligation, but if it be withal backed with an oath, the bond is sacred and inviolable.

But let me ask you what promise it is that you thus made and bound.

If it be of a thing unlawful to be done, your promise and oath is so far from binding you to performance, that it binds you only to repentance that ever you made it. In this case your performance would double and heighten your sin; it was ill to promise, but it would be worse to perform. Herod is by oath engaged for an indefinite favour to Salome; she pitches upon John Baptist's head; he was sorry for such a choice, yet for his oath's sake he thinks he must make it good: surely Herod was ill-principled, that he could think a rash oath must bind him to murder an innocent: he might have truly said, this was more than he could do; for that we can do which we can lawfully do.

But if it be a lawful thing that you have thus promised and sworn, though the promise were unlawfully drawn from you by fear, I dare not persuade you to violate it.

It is true, that divers learned casuists hold, that a promise drawn from a man by fear is void, or at least revocable at pleasure; and so also the oath annexed, which follows the nature of the act whereto it appends: chiefly upon this ground, that both these are done without consent, mere involuntary acts; since nothing can be so contrary to consent as force and fear.

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But I dare not go along with them; for that I apprehend there is not an absolute involuntariness in this engagement, but a mixed one; such as the philosopher[1] determines in the mariner, that cast his goods overboard to save his life; in itself, he hath no will to do it; but here and now, upon this danger imminent, he hath an half-will to perform it.

Secondly, I build upon their own ground. There is the same reason, they say, of force and of fraud.

Now, that a promise and oath drawn from us by fraud binds strongly, we need no other instance than that of Joshua made to the Gibeonites. There could not be a greater fraud than lay hid in the old shoes, threadbare garments, rent bottles, and mouldy provisions of those borderers; who under the pretence of a remote nation put themselves under the interest and protection of Israel, Josh. ix. 12, 13, &c. The guile soon proved apparent; yet durst not Joshua, though he found himself cheated into this covenant, fall off from the league made with them; which when, after many ages, Saul out of politic ends went about to have broken, we see how fearfully it was avenged with a grievous plague of famine upon Israel, even in David's days, 2 Sam. xxi. 1, who was no way accessary to the oppression: neither could be otherwise expiated than by the bleeding of Saul's bloody house.

When once we have interested God in the business, it is dangerous not to be punctual in the performance. If therefore a bold thief, taking you at an advantage, have set his dagger to your breast, and with big oaths threatened to stab you, unless you promise and swear to give him an hundred pounds, to be left on such a day in such a place for him; I see not how, if you be able, you can dispense with the performance; the only help is, (which is well suggested by Lessius[m],) that nothing hinders why you may not, when you have done, call for it back again, as unjustly extorted; and, truly, we are beholden to the Jesuit for so much of a real equivocation: why should you not thus right yourself, since you have only tied yourself to a mere payment of the sum? upon staking it down for him you are free. But if he have forced you to promise and swear not to make him known, you are bound to be silent in this act concerning yourself: but, withal, if you find that your silence may be prejudicial to the public good, for that you perceive the licentiousness of the offender proceeds, and is like

[1] Arist. Eth. l. iii. c. 1.

[m] Lessius de Jure, &c. l. ii. c. 42. dub. 6. [Ubi tamen solvisti potes repetere.]

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so to do, to the like mischief unto others, you ought, though not to accuse him for the fact done unto you, yet to give warning to some in authority to have a vigilant eye upon so lewd a person, for the prevention of any further villany.

But if it be in a business whose peril rests only in yourself, the matter being lawful to be done, your promise and oath, though forced from you, must hold you close to performance, notwithstanding the inconveniences that attend. If therefore you are dismissed upon your parole for a certain time, to return home and dispose of your affairs, and then to yield yourself again prisoner to an enemy, the obligation is so strict and firm, that no private respects may take it off; and it should be a just shame to you, that a pagan[n] should, out of common honesty, hold himself bound to his word, not without the danger of torment and death; when you, that are a Christian, slip away from your oath.

CASE IX.—"Whether those moneys or goods which I have found may be safely taken and kept by me to my own use?"

It is well distinguished by Sotus, out of Aquinas[o], that those things which may be found are either such as call no man master, as some pearl, or precious stone, or ambergris lying upon the shore; or such as have an owner, but unknown to us; or as we may add, to make up the number complete, such as whose owner we know.

Where the true owner is known, speedy restitution must follow; otherwise the detention is in the next door to theft.

Where the commodity found hath no owner, it justly falls to the right of the first finder; for both the place and the thing are masterless, ἀδέσποτα, and common, offering themselves to the next comer.

The only difficulty is in those things which have an unknown owner. And certainly common justice and honesty suggests to us, that we may not seize on commodities of this kind as absolutely our own. The casualty of their mislaying doth not alter their propriety; they are still his that lost them; though out of his sight, yet not out of his right; and even natural justice would give every man his own.

The laws, both civil and canon and municipal, do sufficiently

[n] Attilius Regulus.

[o] Dom. Sot. de Jure et Justit. l. v. q. 3. p. 436. [Ut lapilli et gemmæ quas maritimum littus procreat.]

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guide our practice in many particular cases of this nature, and our conscience must lead us to follow them.

If they be quick commodities, as horses, sheep, kine, and the like, which we call *waifs* and *strays;* every one knows they are to be publicly impounded, that upon search the owner may be the surer to find them; and if he come not in the sooner, to be openly cried in several markets, that the noise of his own neglected goods may come to his ear; and if, upon a continuing silence, they be put into the custody of the lord of the manor, who is most likely to be responsible, and he shall make use of them before his year and day be expired, he shall not do it without some mark of distinction; that yet the true owner may know they are not challenged by the present possessor as his own, but lie open to the just claim of their true master.

But if they be dead commodities, as a jewel, a purse, or some ring of price, or the like; the finder may not presently smother up the propriety of it in his own coffer. His heart tells him, that the mere accident of his finding it cannot alienate the just right of it from the true owner; he is therefore bound in conscience in an honest sincerity to use all good means for the finding out of the right proprietary, whether by secret inquiry or open publication; and if after due inquisition no claim shall be made to it for the present, he shall reserve it in his hand, in expectation of a just challenge; upon the assurance whereof, how late soever, he is bound to restore it to the proper owner; who, on the other side, shall fail in his duty of gratitude if he return not some meet acknowledgment of that good office and fidelity.

In all which mutual carriages we ought to be guided by those respects which we could wish tendered to ourselves in the like occasions.

Meanwhile, in all the time of our custody we are to look upon those commodities as strangers, making account of such a potential right only in them as we are ready and desirous to resign to the hands that purchased and lost them.

On the contrary, no words can express the horrible cruelty and injustice that is wont to be done in this kind, not only on our shores, but in other nations also, upon the shipwrecked goods both of strangers and our own compatriots; while instead of compassioning and relieving the loss and miseries of our distressed brethren, every man is ready to run upon the spoil; and as if it were from some plundered enemy, is eagerly busy in carrying away what

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riches soever come to hand; which they falsely and injuriously term "God's grace," whenas indeed it is no other than the devil's booty. This practice can pass for no other than a mere robbery; so much more heinous, as the condition of the miscarried owner is more miserable. What a foul inhumanity is this, to persecute him whom God hath smitten; and upon no other quarrel to be cruel to our brother, than because the sea hath been merciless!

Dear countrymen, ye especially of the west, leave these abominable pillages to savage nations, that know not God; and putting on the bowels of tender compassion lend your best succour rather for the rescue of poor wrecked souls, and safely preserving that small residue of their drowned freight, which you cannot imagine that the sea hath therefore forborne to swallow, that you might.

CASE X.—"Whether I may lawfully buy those goods which I shall strongly suspect or know to be stolen or plundered; or if I have ignorantly bought such goods, whether I may lawfully, after knowledge of their owner, keep them as mine?"

To buy those goods which you know or have just cause to suspect to be stolen or plundered, is no better than to make yourself accessary to the theft, if you do it with an intention to possess them as your own; for what do you else herein but *ex-post-facto* partake with that thief who stole them, and encourage him in his lewd practices? since, according to the old word, "If there were no receivers there would be no thieves."

Neither will it serve the turn, that, in the case of plunder, there may seem a pretence of justice, in that this is pleaded perhaps to be done by some colour of authority; for, certainly, where there is not law there can be no justice; whereof law is the only rule. Whatever then is against an established law, in matter of right possession, can be no other than unjust. Take heed therefore lest that heavy challenge of the Almighty be, upon this bargain, charged upon you; *When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst with him*, Ps. l. 18. These stolen waters may be sweet in the mouth, but they will be poison in the maw; and like the water of a just jealousy, rottenness to the belly.

But if, as these ill-gotten goods are lightly cheap pennyworths, you buy them only with an intention to gratify the true owner with an easy purchase of his own, which would perhaps else be unrecoverable; while your profession to do it for no other end

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takes off the scandal, I cannot but allow your act, and commend your charity.

But if, making use of that rule which St. Paul gives for meat, in bargaining for any other commodities, you shall extend your liberty to whatsoever is sold in the market; and shall, in the exercise of that freedom, upon a just and valuable consideration, ignorantly buy those goods which you afterwards hear and know to be another's, the contract is on your part valid and faultless, since your invincible want of knowledge acquits you from any guilt of consent. But, withal, there is an aftergame to be played by you; you are bound, upon just notice, to acquaint the true owner with the matter, and to proffer yourself ready to join with him in the prosecution of law or justice upon the offender, and upon a meet satisfaction to tender him his own.

But if the theft be only on probability, and it be doubtful whether the goods belong to the owner notified to you, your duty is to make diligent inquiry into the business; and if upon due inquisition you find too much likelihood of the theft, I dare not advise you, with some casuists, to reverse the bargain, and to return the commodity to those false hands that purloined it; but rather to call the probable owner, and with him to appeal unto just authority, for a more full examination of the right, and an award answerable to justice: but if there appear no good grounds for an impeachment, you may peaceably sit down in the possession till further evidence may convince your judgment in the contrary.

THE SECOND DECADE.

CASES OF LIFE AND LIBERTY.

CASE I.—"Whether, and in what cases, it may be lawful for a man to take away the life of another?"

How light a matter soever it may seem to the world, now long soaked in blood, a man's life is most precious; and may not, but upon the weightiest of all causes, be either taken or given away.

The great God hath reserved to himself this prerogative to be the only absolute Lord of it; neither can any creature have power to command it, but those only to whom he hath committed it by special deputation; nor they neither by any independent or illimited authority, but according as it is regulated by just laws:

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to call for a man's life merely out of will is no other than a Turkish tyranny.

Now the same God that hath ordained sovereign powers to judge of and protect the life of others, hath given weighty charge to every man to tender and manage his own; which binds him to use all just means for his own preservation, although it should be the necessitated destruction of another.

Let us see therefore how far, and in what cases, man, that is always appointed to be master of his own life, may be also master of another man's.

That public justice may take away the life of heinous malefactors is sufficiently known to be not lawful only, but required; and indeed so necessary, that without it there were no living at all amongst men.

That in a just war the life of an open enemy may be taken away is no less evident.

The only question is of private men, in their own cases.

And here we need not doubt to say, that even a private man, being mortally assaulted, may in his own defence lawfully kill another. I suppose the assault mortal, when both the weapon is deadly and the fury of the assailant threatens death. As for some slight and sudden passages of a switch or a cane, they come not under this consideration; although those small affronts offered to eminent persons prove oftentimes to be quarrels no less than mortal. But even in these assaults, except the violence be so too impetuous that it will admit of neither parley nor pause, there ought to be, so much as may consist with our necessary safety, a tender regard and endeavour to avoid the spilling of blood; but if neither persuasion nor the shifting (what we may) our station can abate any thing of the rage of the assailer, death must; yea, if not my brother only, but my father or my son, should in this forcible manner set upon me, howsoever I should hazard the award of some blows, and with tears beg a forbearance, yet if there would be no remedy, nature must pardon me; no man can be so near me as myself.

I cannot therefore subscribe to the counsel of Leonardus Lessius[a], abetting some ancient casuists, and pretended to be countenanced by some fathers, that it were meet for clerical and religious persons rather to suffer death than to kill a murderer; since no reason can be showed why their life should not be as

[a] Less. de Jur. &c. l. ii. c. 9. dubit. 8. Ex Antonio et Sylvestr. &c. [§. 55.]

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dear to them as others', or why they should be exempted from the common law of nature, or why their sacred hands should be more stained with the foul blood of a wicked man-slayer, justly shed, than any others'. I am sure Phineas thought not so, nor Samuel after him; and which is most of all, that the honour and privileges of the sons of Levi were both procured and feoffed on them upon an enjoined bloodshed.

Only here is the favour and mercy of that learned casuist, that clerks and votaries are not always bound rather to die than kill: "For," saith he[b], "if such a religious person should bethink himself that he is in a deadly sin, and should thereupon fear that he should be damned if he were killed in that woful and desperate estate, he were then bound by all means to defend himself, and to prefer the safety of his own soul before the life of another." As if nothing but the fear of damnation could warrant a man for his own safeguard; as if nothing but the danger of hell could authorize an holy person to be his own guardian; as if the best of lives were so cheap and worthless, that they might be given away for nothing: whereas, contrarily, *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of all his saints,* Ps. cxvi. 15.

But in such a case, according to the opinion of this great casuist[c], charity to ourselves doth not more arm and enforce our hand than charity to our neighbour holds it and binds it up: we may not kill, lest the manslayer, dying in the attempt of this murder, should everlastingly perish. Surely I cannot but admire this unreasonable mercy in a father of the Society. Where was this consideration when so many thousands of innocent persons were doomed to be blown up in a state of impenitence, whose unrepented heresy must needs have sent them up instantly to their hell?

By this reason, a malefactor, if he be obdured in his sin, and professeth to be remorseless, may not feel the stroke of justice.

Shortly, then, if a man will needs be wicked to my destruction, the evil is his own: let him bear his own guilt; let me look to my own indemnity.

The case is yet more difficult, where the attempt is not upon my person, but my goods. If a man will be offering to rob my house, or to take my purse, what may I do in this case? Surely, neither charity nor justice can dissuade me from resisting: the

[b] Less. de Jur. &c. paragr. ult. [§ 56.]

[c] Less. ibid.

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laws of God and man will allow me to defend my own: and if in this resistance the thief or burglar miscarry, his blood will be upon his own head: although, in the mean time, charity forbids that this slaughter should be first in my intention; which is primarily bent upon my own safety, and the vindication of my own just property. The blood that follows is but the unwilling attendant of my defence; of the shedding whereof God is so tender, that he ordained it only to be inoffensively done in a nightly robbery, Exod. xxii. 2, where the purpose of the thief is likely to be more murderous, and the act more uncapable of restitution.

What, then, if the thief, after his robbery done, ceasing any further danger of violence, shall betake himself to his heels and run away with my money? In such a case, if the sum be so considerable as that it much imports my estate, however our municipal laws may censure it, with which, of old, even a killing, *se defendendo*, was no less than felony of death[d]: my conscience should not strike me, if I pursue him with all might; and in hot chase so strike him, as that by this means I disable him from a further escape, for the recovery of my own: and if hereupon his death shall follow, however I should pass with men, God and my own heart would acquit me.

Neither doubt I to say the like may be done, upon a forcible attempt of the violation of the chastity of either sex: a case long ago adjudged by the doom of nature itself, in Marius, the general of the Roman army, as Cicero tells us[e], clearly acquitting a young man for killing a colonel that would have forced him in this kind.

But I may not assent to Dominicus Bannez, Petrus Navarrus, and Cajetan[f], though grave authors; who hold, that if a man go about upon false and deadly criminations to suborn witnesses against me, to accuse me to a corrupted judge, with a purpose to take away my life in a colour of justice, if I have no other way to avoid the malice, I may lawfully kill him. It were a woful and dangerous case if every man might be allowed to carve himself of justice. Mere accusations are no convictions. How know I what God may work for me on the bench or at the bar? what evidence he may raise to clear me? what confusion or contradiction he may cause in the mouths of the hired witnesses? what change

[d] Dalton, p. 244.
[e] Orat. pro Mil. [§ iv. Oxon. 1783.]
[f] Bann. q. 64. Art. 7. dub. 4. [Ed. Venet. 1595. p. 220.] Nav. l. ii. c. 3. [Pet. a Navarra de Restit.] Less. l. ii. de Jure, &c. c. 9. dub. 8. [§ 47.]

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he may work in the judge? what interposition of higher powers? There is a Providence in this case to be relied upon, which can and will bring about his own holy purposes, without our presumptuous and unwarrantable undertakings.

CASE II.—"Whether may I lawfully make use of a duel, for the deciding of my right or the vindication of mine honour?"

I have long ago spent my opinion upon this point, in a large epistolary discourse[g], which I find no reason to alter. Thither I might refer you, to spare my labour; but lest, perhaps, that should not be at hand, shortly thus:—

The sword, in a private hand, was never ordained to be a decider of any controversies, save this one, whether of the two is the better fencer; nor yet that always; since *the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong*, as Solomon hath observed, Eccles. ix. 11.

It can be no better, therefore, than a mere tempting of God, as Rodriguez justly censures it[h], to put ourselves or our cause upon so unwarranted a trial.

I find but two practices of it in the records of Scripture.

The one, that famous challenge of Goliath, which that proud Philistine had not made if he had not presumed of his giantly strength and stature, so utterly unmatchable by all Israel (1 Sam. xvii. 24), that the whole host was ready to give back upon his appearance. He knew the advantage so palpable, that none would dare to undertake the quarrel; and had still gone on to triumph over that trembling army, had not God's unexpected champion, by divine instinct, taken up the monster, and vanquished him; leaving all but his head to bedung that earth which had lately shaken at his terror.

The other was in that mortal quarrel betwixt Joab and Abner on the behalf of their two masters, David and Ishbosheth, 2 Sam. ii.14; wherein Abner invites his rival in honour to a tragical play, as he terms it, a monomachy of twelve single combatants on either part; which was so acted, that no man went victor away from that bloody theatre.

Only it is observable, that, in both these conflicts, still the challengers had the worst.

In imitation of which latter, I cannot allow that which I find

[g] See Epistles. Decade iv. Ep. 2.—PRATT.

[h] Rodrig. Sum. cas. Pars 1. cap. 73. [Ed. Ven. 1628. p. 150.]

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frequently done in the managing of public hostility, that some confident cavalier, out of mere bravery of spirit, craves leave to put himself forth before both armies, and, as in way of preface to an ensuing battle, bids defiance to any antagonist: an act of more valour than judgment, whereof the undertaking is void of warrant, and the issue (lightly) of success; while it pleaseth God, commonly, to punish presumption with a foil; and the ominous miscarriage of one proves a sad discouragement to many.

And if single fortitude be not triable this way, much less justice, in causes litigious. To make the sword arbiter of such differences were no better than to revive the old ordealian trial used by our heathen ancestors; sith God hath no more ordained nor promised to bless the one than the other. And reason itself tells us in how ill a condition that righteous cause is which must be carried by the sharper weapon, the stronger arm, the skilfuller fencer.

Now whereas there are two acts as introductions into the field, a challenge and an acceptation; both of them have their guilt: but the former so much more, as it hath in it more provocation to evil.

I cannot, therefore, but wonder at and cry down the opinion of Bannez and Cajetan, that a man, slandered by an unjust accuser, may justly challenge him the field, and vindicate himself by the sword: a doctrine which, if it were allowed and accordingly practised, besides that it would destroy the course of justice and wrest revenge out of the hands of the Almighty, were enough to make the world an aceldama; for who would not be his own judge for the accusation, and his own executioner for the revenge?

There may yet seem more innocence in the acceptation, which makes show of a mere passive nature, and appears to be extorted by the insolence of a provoking adversary; whose pressures are wont to receive such construction as that the challenged party refusing, upon what ground soever, is in the vulgar opinion proclaimed for base and recreant; and I must needs confess the irritation diminisheth the offence. But, withal, however the Spanish and Italian casuists, whose nations are wont to stand a little too highly upon the points of a miscalled honour, are wont to pass fair interpretations of the matter, I cannot but find it deeply guilty also; for what is this other than a consent to sin by engaging in blood? which, by a man wise and conscionable,

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might be turned off with a just contempt, without imputation of cowardice; since the plea of conscience is able to bear down the vain fancies of idle swordmen; or, if that will not be taken, the false blurs that are cast upon a worthy man's reputation by vulgar breath deserve no entertainment but scorn; or, lastly, other means lie open to both parts for the proof of a questioned valour, which in a lawful way the challenged is ready to embrace. He walks, not unprovided, about the business of his calling; if he be fairly set upon on equal terms, he shall make no doubt to defend himself; but to make a formal business of a quarrel on either part, and to agree upon a bargain of bloodshedding, is wicked and damnable; and though both should come fairly off, yet the very intention to kill is murder.

This case is so clear, that the council of Trent[1] hath thought fit to denounce heavy sentences and inflict sharp censures upon emperors, kings, states, and potentates, that shall give allowance to duels within their dominions, pronouncing them *ipso jure* excommunicate, and depriving them of those towns, cities, lands, if held of the Church, where such unlawful acts are made; and that those who either act or patronise, and by their presence assist, countenance, or abet such combats, shall incur the sentence of excommunication, the loss of all their goods, and perpetual infamy; and if they die in such quarrel, shall, as self-murderers, be debarred the privilege of Christian burial.

Briefly, therefore, neither your justice nor your honour may depend upon the point of private swords; and if there can be no other remedy, you must rather suffer in either, than hazard your soul.

CASE III.—"Whether may it be lawful, in case of extremity, to procure the abortion of the child for the preservation of the mother?"

I fear want of true judgment renders too many of the weaker sex grossly culpable in matter of willing abortion; while, being not well principled either in nature or grace, they think it not unlawful, or at least venially so, whether out of the fear of painful childbirth or for the avoidance of too great a charge, to prevent the fulness of their conceptions; and therefore either by

[1] Conc. Tr. Sess. 25. [c. 19.] Rodriguez. tom. i. c. 73. de Duello. [In Concil. Trident. ponuntur graves pœnæ contra imperatores, reges, et alios magnates qui, &c.]

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over-vehement motion or unwholesome medicine are not unwilling to forestal nature, and to free themselves early of that which might in time prove their burden. Wherein they little know how highly they offend the majesty of God in destroying his potential creature; and how heavy weight of guilt they lay upon their souls while they endeavour to give an undue ease to their bodies.

Your question supposes an extremity; and surely such it had need to be, that may warrant the intention of such an event.

For the deciding whereof our casuists are wont to distinguish double, both of the state of the conception and of the nature of the receipt.

In the former, they consider of the conception, either as it is before it receive life, or after that it is animated. Before it receive life, they are wont to determine, that howsoever it were no less than mortal sin in a physician to prescribe a medicinal receipt to cause abortion, for the hiding of a sin, or any outward secular occasion; yet, for the preservation of the life of the mother, in an extreme danger, (I say, before animation,) it might be lawful; but after life once received, it were an heinous sin to administer any such mortal remedy. The later casuists are better advised, and justly hold, that to give any such expelling or destructive medicine with a direct intention to work an aborsement, whether before or after animation, is utterly unlawful and highly sinful. And with them I cannot but concur in opinion; for after conception we know that naturally follows animation; there is only the time that makes the difference; which, in this case, is not so considerable as to take off a sin; that of Tertullian[k] comes home to the point, which both Covarruvias and Lessius[l] urge to this purpose: *Homicidii festinatio est, prohibere nasci:* "It is but a hastening of murder to injure that which would be born:" *Homo est qui futurus est:* "It is a man that would be so," &c. Upon this ground we know that, in a further degree of remoteness, a voluntary self-pollution hath ever been held to have so much guilt in it, as that Angelus Politianus reports it as the high praise of Michael Verrinus, that he would rather die than yield to it[m]: how much more when there is a further progress made towards the perfection of human life! And if you tell me that the life of the mother might

[k] Tertul. in Apol. c. 9.
[l] Less. l. ii. c. 9. du. 10. [§ 61.]
[m] *Ne se polluceret, maluit ille mori.* Ex Politiano Gerard. Voss de Orig. et Progres Idol. l. iii. c. 18. [Amst. 1642. p. 810.]

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thus be preserved, whereas otherwise both she and all the possibilities of further conceptions are utterly lost; I must answer you with that sure and universal rule of the apostle, that we may not do evil that good may come thereon, Rom. iii. 8.

The second consideration is, of the nature of the receipt, and the intention of the prescriber.

There are prescripts that may in and of themselves tend towards cure, and may have ordinarily such an effect; but yet, being used and applied for the mother's remedy, may prove the loss of the conception, being yet inanimate. These, if they be given with no other intention than the preservation of the mother's life, may be capable of excuse; for that the inconvenience, or mischief rather, which followed upon the receipts, was accidental, and utterly against the mind and hopes of him that advised them.

But if the conception be once formed and animated, the question will be so much more difficult, as the proceedings of nature are more forward. Whereupon it is, that the Septuagint in their translation, as Lessius well observes[n], have rendered that Mosaical law concerning abortions in these terms: *If a man strike a woman that is with child, and she make an abortion; if the child were formed, he shall give his life for the life of the child: if it were not formed, he shall be punished with a pecuniary mulct to her husband*[o], Exodus xxi. 22, applying that to the issue, which the Vulgar Latin understands of the mother; and making the supposition to be of a formation and life, which the Latin, more agreeably to the original, makes to be *death;* and our English, with Castalion[p], expresses by *mischief:* but whether the mischief be meant of the death of the mother or of the late living issue, the Scripture hath not declared. Cornelius à Lapide[q], taking it expressly of the mother's death, yet draws the judgment out in an equal length to the death of the child, once animated; making no difference of the guilt; since the infant's soul is of no less worth than her's that bears him.

In this case of the conception animated, I find the casuists much divided.

[n] Ubi supra.

[o] The Septuagint seems to have taken אָסוֹן *death,* [Injury or hurt. Gesenius] for אִישׁוֹן a diminutive of אִישׁ *a man;* as Cornel. à Lapid. probably guesses. [In Exod. xxi. 23.]

[p] Castal. *Si pernicies non fuerit;* Ours, *If no mischief follow.*

[q] Cornel. à Lapid. in Exod. xxi. [ut supra.]

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While some, more tender than their fellows, will not allow in the utmost extremity of a dying mother a medicine that may be directly curative to be given her, if it should be with any apparent danger of the child, in case that the child may be probably drawn forth alive: which they do upon this false and bloodily uncharitable ground, that the child, dying without baptism, is liable to eternal damnation; which woful danger therefore the mother ought to prevent, though with the certain hazard of her own life[r]. But the foundation of this judgment being unsound (since to doom the children of believing parents inevitably to hell for the want of that which they are not possibly capable to receive, is too cruel and horrible), the structure must needs totter. These men, while they profess themselves too careful of the soul of the child, which yet may perhaps be safer than their own, seem to be somewhat too hardhearted to the body of the mother.

Others, more probably, hold, that if the case be utterly desperate, and it be certain that both mother and child must undoubtedly perish if some speedy remedy be not had; it may then be lawful to make use of such receipts as may possibly give some hopes to save the mother, though not without some peril of the child[s].

But all this while, the intentions and endeavours must be no other than preservatory, however it pleaseth God to order the events.

Shortly, no man, that purposely procureth an abortion, as such, can wash his hands from blood: no woman, that wilfully acts or suffers it, however the secresy may exempt her from the danger of human laws, can think to avoid those judgments of the righteous God which he hath charged upon murderers.

I cannot here therefore forbear to give the world notice of the impious indulgence of a late pope in this kind. Sixtus Quintus, who in our time sat in the see of Rome, finding the horrible effects of that liberty which too many, both secular and religious persons, took to themselves in this matter of abortion; in a just detestation of that damnable practice, thought meet, in much fervour of spirit, to set forth his *Bulla Cruciatæ*, than which there was never a more zealous piece published to the world; wherein that pope pronounces all those which have any hand in the acting or

[r] Vel ut alii, *Quorum animæ certissime in limbum descendunt sine Baptismo.* Mart. Alphons. Viv. Explan. Bullæ de Abort.

[s] Rodr. Sum. pars 1. c. 5. de Abort. [Concl. 1.]

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procuring of this wicked fact, of the ejecting of conceptions, whether animate or inanimate, formed or unformed, by potions or medicaments or any other means whatsoever, to have incurred both the crime and punishment of manslaughter, charging due execution to be done upon such persons accordingly: and withal, in a direful manner excommunicates them, and sends them to hell (without repentance); reserving the absolution solely to himself and his successors.

Now comes a late successor of his[t], Gregory XIV, who finding the sentence too unreasonably hard for his petulant and thrifty Italians, and indeed for all loose persons of both sexes, mitigates the matter; and as a Spanish casuist expresses it truly, in the very first year of his pontificate, in a certain constitution of his, dated at Rome the last day of May, 1591, *delevit censuras, quas Sixtus V. imposuerat contra facientes, procurantes,* &c. "abolished and took off those heavy censures which Sixtus had imposed, and reduced the terrible punishments by him ordained to be inflicted unto a poor bare irregularity; and determines, that any confessor, allowed by the ordinary, may absolve from this sin of procured abortion[u];" by the slightness of the censure, in effect animating the sin. An act well becoming the mother of fornications. After all which pandarism, let all good Christians know and resolve the crime to be no less than damnable.

But withal, let me advise you, with Martinus Vivaldus[x], that what I have herein written against the procurers of abortions may not be extended to the practice of those discreet physicians and chirurgeons, who being called to for their aid in difficult and hopeless childbirths, prescribe to the woman in travail such receipts as may be like to hasten her delivery, whether the child be alive or dead; forasmuch as the conception is now at the full maturity, and the endeavour of these artists is not to force an aborsement, but to bring forward a natural birth, to the preservation of the mother or the child or both.

CASE IV.—"Whether a man adjudged to perpetual imprisonment or death may in conscience endeavour and practise an escape."

What the civil or common laws have in this case determined for

[t] Viv. Rodrig. ubi supra.

[u] Constit. Greg. XIV. *Quæ dicit, quod quivis confessor, approbatus ab ordinario, potest absolvere a peccato abortus.* Ibid.

[x] Mart. Alphons. Vivald. explic. Bull. Cruc.

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the public good, comes not within the compass of our disquisition. Let the guardians and ministers of those laws look carefully to the just execution of them accordingly. The question is only of the law of private conscience, how far that will allow a man to go in case of a sentence passed upon him, whether of death or bonds.

And first of all, if such sentence be unjustly passed upon an innocent, no man can doubt but that he may most lawfully, by all just means, work his own freedom.

But if an offender, what may he do?

The common opinion of casuists is peremptory; that "he that is kept in prison for any offence, whereupon may follow death or loss of limb, whether the crime be public or private, may lawfully flee from his imprisonment, and may for that purpose use those helps of filing or mining which conduce to this purpose[y]."

Their ground is that universal rule and instinct of self-preservation which is natural to every creature; much more eminent in man, who is furnished with better faculties than the rest for the working of his own indemnity. Whereto is added that main consideration of Aquinas,—that no man is bound to kill himself, but only doomed to suffer death; not therefore bound to do that upon which death will inevitably follow, which is to wait in prison for the stroke, if he may avoid it: it is enough that he patiently submits to what the law forces upon him, though he do not co-operate to his own destruction: his sentence abridges him of power, not of will to depart.

Whereupon they have gone so far as to hold it in point of conscience not unlawful for the friends of the imprisoned to convey unto him files and cords, or other instruments useful for their escape.

But herein some better-advised doctors have justly dissented from them, as those whose judgment hath not been more favourable to malefactors than dangerous and prejudicial to the commonwealth; for how safe soever this might seem in lighter trespasses, yet if this might be allowed as in conscience lawful to be done to the rescue of murderers, traitors, or such other flagitious villains, what infinite mischief might it produce! and what were this other than to invite men to be accessary to those crimes which the law in a due way intends to punish? Certainly, by how much a more

[y] "Qui retinetur in carcere propter aliquod delictum," &c. Rodriq. Sum. [Pars I.] cap. 40.

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laudable act of justice it is to free the society of men from such wicked miscreants, by so much more sinful and odious an office it were to use these sinister means for their exemption from the due course of justice.

But howsoever for another man to yield such unlawful aid is no better than a foul affront of public justice, and enwraps the agent in a partnership of crime; yet the law of nature puts this liberty upon the restrained party himself both to wish and endeavour his own deliverance; although not so but that if the prisoner have engaged himself by solemn promise and oath to his keeper not to depart out of his custody, honesty must prevail above nature, and he ought rather to die than violate that bond, which is stronger than his irons. Very heathens have by their example taught us this lesson, to regard our fidelity more than our life. Thus it should be, and is, with those that are truly Christian and ingenuous, under whatever capacity: but in the case of graceless and felonious persons, gaolers have reason to look to their bolts and locks; knowing, according to the old rule of wise Thales, that he who hath not stuck at one villany will easily swallow another; perjury will easily down with him that hath made no bones of murder.

But where the case is entire, no man can blame a captive if he would be free; and if he may untie the knot of a cord wherewith he was bound, why may he not unrivet or grate an iron wherewith he is fettered? forsomuch as he is not bound to yield or continue a consent to his own durance. This charge lies upon the keeper, not the prisoner.

A man that is condemned to perish by famine, yet if he can come by sustenance may receive and eat it. That Athenian malefactor in Valerius Maximus[z], sentenced to die by hunger, was never found fault with that he maintained himself in his dungeon by the breasts of his good natured daughter.

And if a man be condemned to be devoured by a lion, there can be no reason why he should not, what he may, resist that furious beast, and save his own life.

But when I see our Romish casuists so zealously tender in the case of religious persons, as that they will not allow them, upon a just imprisonment, to stir out of those grates whereto they are confined by the doom of their prelates; and when I see the brave resolutions of holy martyrs, that even when the doors were

[z] Val. Max. l. v. [c. 4.] Dom. Sot. de Jure, &c. l. v. q. 6. [Art. 4.]

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set open would not flee from a threatened death; I cannot but conclude, that whatsoever nature suggests to a man to work for his own life or liberty, when it is forfeited to justice, yet that it is meet and commendable in a true penitent, when he finds the doom of death or perpetual durance justly passed upon him, humbly to submit to the sentence, and not entertain the motions and means of a projected evasion, but meekly to stoop unto lawful authority, and to wait upon the issue whether of justice or mercy, and at the worst to say with the poet, *Merui, nec deprecor.*

CASE V.—"Whether, and how far, a man may be urged to an oath?"

An oath, as it is a sacred thing, so it must be no otherwise than holily used, whether on the part of the giver or taker; and therefore may neither be rashly uttered nor unduly tendered upon slight or unwarrantable occasions.

We have not to do here with a promissory oath, the obligation whereof is for another inquisition; it is the assertory oath that is now under our hand, which the great God, by whom we swear, hath ordained to be an end of controversies: *At the mouth of two or three witnesses shall the matter be established,* Deut. xix. 15, and xvii. 6.

As for secular titles of "mine" or "thine," the propriety [property] of goods or lands, next after written evidences, testimonies upon oath must needs be held most fitly decisive; the only scruples are wont to be made in causes criminal.

Wherein surely we may first lay this undoubted ground, that no man is to be proceeded against without an accuser, and that accusation must be made good by lawful witnesses. A judge may not cast any man upon the plea of his own eyesight: should this liberty be granted, innocence might suffer, and malice triumph. Neither may any man be condemned upon hearsay, which how commonly false it is daily experience sufficiently evinceth.

On the other side, men are apt enough to connive at each other's wickedness; and every man is loath to be an informer, whether out of the envy of the office or out of the conscience of his own obnoxiousness.

And yet, thirdly, it is requisite that care should be taken, and all due means used by authority, that the world may not be overrun with wickedness; but that vice may be found out, repressed, punished.

There cannot, fourthly, be devised a fairer and more probable

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course for the effecting hereof, than by the discovery, upon oaths, of the officers and jurors in assizes and sessions; and of churchwardens and sidemen in visitations.

The ground of all presentments to or by these men must be either their own knowledge, or public fame, or an avowed information. Any of these gives a lawful hint to the judge, whether ecclesiastical or civil, to take full trial of the cause and persons.

Knowledge is always certain, but fame is often a liar; and therefore every idle rumour must not be straight taken upon trust; the inconvenience and injury whereof I have often seen, when some malicious person, desiring to do a despite to an innocent neighbour, raises a causeless slander against him, and whispers it to some disaffected gossips: this flies to the ear of an apparitor; he straight runs to the office, and suggests a public fame: the honest man is called into the court: his reputation is blurred in being but summoned, and after all his trouble and disgrace hath his amends in his own hands.

The rule of some casuists, that ten tongues make a fame, is groundless and insufficient; neither is the number so much to be regarded as the quality of the persons: if a whole pack of debauched companions shall conspire to stain the good name of an innocent, as we have too often known, it were a shameful injustice to allow them the authors of a fame.

The more judicious doctors have defined a public fame by the voice of the greater part of that community wherein it is spread, whether town, parish, city; and therein of those that are discreet, honest, well behaved. We are wont to say, "Where there is much smoke there is likely some fire." An universal report from such mouths, therefore, may well give occasion to a further inquiry.

If any man's zeal against vice will make it a matter of instance, the case is clear, and the proceeding unquestionable; but if it be matter of mere office, the carriage of the process may be liable to doubt.

Herein it is meet such course be taken as that neither a notorious evil may be smothered nor yet innocence injured. To which purpose the most confident reporter may be called upon, because fame hath too many tongues to speak at once, to lay forth the grounds of that his whispered crimination; and if the circumstances appear pregnant, and the suspicions strong, I see not why the ecclesiastical judge, for with him only in this case I profess

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to meddle, may not convent the person accused, lay before him the crime which is secretly charged upon him, and either upon his ingenuous confession enjoin him such satisfaction to the scandalized congregation as may be most fit, or upon his denial urge him to clear himself by lawful witnesses of the crime objected; or why he may not, if he see further cause, appoint a discreet and able prosecutor to follow the business in a legal way, upon whom the accused, if he be found guiltless, may right himself.

But all this while I find no just place for an oath to be administered to a man for his own accusation, which certainly is altogether both illegal and unreasonable. If a man will voluntarily offer to clear himself by an oath, out of the assuredness of his own innocence, he may be allowed to be heard; but this may neither be pressed to be done nor yet conclusive when it is done: for both every man is apt to be partial in his own case, and he that durst act a foul sin will dare to face it. It was ever therefore lawful, even when ecclesiastical inquisitions were at the highest, for a man to refuse answer to such questions, upon oath or otherwise, which tended to his own impeachment, as unjustly and unwarrantably proposed; and it was but a young determination of Aquinas[a], when he was only a bachelor in the general chapter at Paris, contradicted by all the ancient graduates there, that when the crime is notorious and the author unknown, the secret offender is bound, upon his ordinary's charge and command, to reveal himself.

Even the Spanish casuists, the great favourers and abettors of the inquisition, teach that the judge may not of himself begin an inquiry, but must be led by something which may open a way to his search; and, as it were, force him to his proceeding *ex officio;* as public notice, infamy, common suspicion, complaint; otherwise the whole process is void in law. Although herein some of them go too far in favour of their great Diana; that where the crime is known and the author unknown, the judge may, in a generality, inquire of him that did it; and if he have any private information, though without any public fame foregoing, he may, in some cases, raise a particular inquisition upon the party, and call him to defend himself; which course certainly gives too much advantage to private malice, and opens too much way to the wronging of innocence.

[a] Silvestr. V. Correct. Dom. Sot. l. v. de Jure, q. 6. [ut supra.] Less. de Judice l. ii. c. 29.

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The fair way of proceeding in all Christian judicatures should be by accuser, witness, and judge; in distinct persons, openly known: the accuser complains; the witness evinceth; the judge sentences: the one may not be the other, much less all three. Were that to be allowed, who could be innocent?

When a witness, then, is called before a competent judge to give evidence upon oath concerning a third person in a matter cognoscible by that jurisdiction, he is bound to swear *in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness*, Jer. iv. 2. As for his own concernments, he must refer himself to the testimonies and oaths of others.

CASE VI.—"Whether a judge may, upon allegations, proofs, and evidences of others, condemn a man to death, whom he himself certainly knows to be innocent?"

The question hath undergone much agitation.

The stream of all ancient divines and casuists runs upon the affirmative. Their ground is, that the judge, as he is a public person, so in the seat of judicature he must exercise a public authority; and therefore, waving his private knowledge and interest, must sentence according to the allegations and proofs brought before him; since he is a judge of the cause, not of the law; whereof he is to be the servant, not the master. There he sits, not to speak his own judgment, but to be the mouth of the law; and the law commands him to judge according to the evidence; the evidence therefore being clear and convictive, the doom can be no other than condemnatory.

For my part, I can more marvel at their judgment herein than approve it; professing for the negative, with some fewer and later authors upon these sure grounds:—

It is an evident and undeniable law of God, which must be the rule of all judges, *The innocent and the righteous slay thou not*, Exod. xxiii. 7. This is a law neither to be avoided nor dispensed with. Accusations and false witnesses cannot make a man other than innocent: they may make him to seem so; insomuch as those that know not the cause exactly may perhaps be misled to condemn him in their judgments: but to the judge, whose eyes were witnesses of the party's innocence, all the evidence in the world cannot make him other than guiltless; so as that judge shall be guilty of blood, in slaying the innocent and righteous.

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Secondly; The law of judging according to allegations and proofs is a good general direction in the common course of proceedings; but there are cases wherein this law must vail to an higher, which is the law of conscience. Woe be to that man who shall tie himself so close to the letter of the law as to make shipwreck of conscience: and that bird in his bosom will tell him, that if, upon whatever pretences, he shall willingly condemn an innocent, he is no better than a murderer.

Thirdly; It is not the bare letter of the law that wise men should stand upon, but the drift and intention of the law; of that we may, in some sense, say, as the apostle did of an higher law, *the letter killeth*. Now every reasonable man knows, that the intention of the law is to save and protect the innocent, to punish only the guilty; the judge therefore shall be a perverter of law, if, contrary to his knowledge, he shall follow the letter against the intention, in condemning an innocent.

Let no man now tell me, that it is the law that condemns the man, and not the judge. This excuse will not serve before the tribunal of Heaven. The law hath no tongue; it is the judge that is *lex loquens:* if he then shall pronounce that sentence which his own heart tells him is unjust and cruel, what is he but an officious minister of injustice? But indeed what law ever said, "Thou shalt kill that man whom thou knowest innocent, if false witness will swear him guilty?" This is but a false gloss set upon a true text, to countenance a man in being an instrument of evil.

What then is, in this case, to be done?

Surely, as I durst not acquit that judge who, under whatever colour of law, should cast away a known innocent: so I durst not advise, against plain evidences and flat depositions, upon private knowledge, that man to be openly pronounced guiltless, and thereby discharged; for as the one is a gross violation of justice, so were the other a public affront to the law, and of dangerous consequence to the weal public. Certainly, it could not but be extremely unsafe that such a gap should be opened to the liberty of judgment, that a private breast should be opposed, with an apparent prevalence, against public convictions.

Our casuists have beaten their brains to find out some such evasions as might save the innocent from death and the judge from blood-guiltiness. Herein therefore they advise the judge to use some secret means to stop the accusation or indictment; (a course that might be as prejudicial to justice as a false sentence;)

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to sift the witnesses apart, as in Susanna's case; and, by many subtle interrogations of the circumstances, to find their variance or contradiction. If that prevail not, Cajetan goes so far as to determine it meet (which how it might stand with their law, he knows; with ours it would not), that the judge should, before all the people, give his oath, that he knows the party guiltless: as whom he himself saw, at that very hour, in a place far distant from that wherein the fact is pretended to be done. Yea, Dominicus à Soto[b] could be content, if it might be done without scandal, that the prisoner might secretly be suffered to slip out of the gaol and save himself by flight. Others think it the best way that the judge should put off the cause to a superior bench; and that himself should, laying aside his scarlet, come to the bar; and as a witness avow upon oath the innocence of the party and the falsity of the accusation. Or, lastly, if he should, out of malice or some other sinister ends, as of the forfeiture of some rich estate, be pressed by higher powers to pass the sentence on his own bench, that he ought to lay down his commission, and to abdicate that power he hath, rather than to suffer it forced to a willing injustice.

And truly, were the case mine, after all fair and lawful endeavours to justify the innocent and to avoid the sentence, I should most willingly yield to this last resolution; yea, rather myself to undergo the sentence of death, than to pronounce it on the known guiltless; hating the poor pusillanimity of Dominicus à Soto[c], that passes a *nimis creditu rigidum* upon so just a determination, and is so weakly tender of the judge's indemnity, that he will by no means hear of his wilful deserting of his office on so capital an occasion.

In the main cause of life and death, I cannot but allow and commend the judgment of Leonardus Lessius; but when the question is of matters civil, or less criminal[d], I cannot but wonder at his flying off. In these, wherein the business is but pecuniary, or banishment, or loss of an office, he holds it lawful for the judge (after he hath used all means to discover the falseness of the proofs and to hinder the proceedings, if thus he prevails not) to pass sentence upon those allegations and probations which himself knows to be unjust.

[b] Dom. à Sot. de Jure, &c. l. v. q. 6.

[c] *Etenim quod homo, qui officio suo vivit, debeat tantam jacturam facere, dum creditu est.* Dom. Sot. ubi supra.

[d] *In causis civilibus et minus criminalibus.*

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The reasons pretended are as poor as the opinion. "For," saith he, "the commonwealth hath authority to dispose of the estates of the subjects, and to translate them from one man to another, as may be found most availing to the public good: and here there appears just cause so to do, lest the form of public judgments should be perverted, not without great scandal to the people; neither is there any way possible to help this particular man's inconvenience and loss: therefore the commonwealth may ordain that in such a case the judge should follow the public form of judicature, though hereby it falleth out that a guiltless man is undone in his fortunes, and yet his cause known to be good by him that condemns it." Thus he[c].

But what a loose point is this! Why hath not a man as true propriety in his estate as his life? or what authority hath the commonwealth causelessly to take away a man's substance or inheritance, being that he is the rightful owner, more than a piece of himself? When his patrimony is settled upon him, and his in a due course of law and undoubted right of possession, what just power can claim any such interest in it, as without any ground of offence to dispossess him? Or what necessity is there that the form of public judgments should be perverted, unless an honest defendant must be undone by false sentence? Or rather, is not the form of public judgment perverted when innocence suffers for the maintenance of a formality? Or how is the judge other than a partner in the injury, if for want of his seasonable interposition a good cause is lost and a false plea prevails?

That therefore which, in the second place, he allegeth, that the subject can have no reason to complain of the judge, forasmuch as it is out of his power to remedy the case, and to pass other sentence than is chalked forth by the rule of law, might as well be alleged against him in the plea of life and death; wherein he will by no means allow the judge this liberty of an undue condemnation; neither is there any just pretence why an honest and well-minded judge should be so sparing in a case of life, and so too prodigal in matter of livelihood.

As for his third reason, that the mis-judgment, in case of a pecuniary damage or banishment, may be afterwards capable of being reversed, and upon a new traverse the cause may be fetched about at further leisure, whereas death once inflicted is past all

[c] Less. de Jure, &c. l. ii. [c. 29.] de Judice dub. 10. [§ 84.] *Quia resp. habeat authoritatem disponendi, &c.*

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power of revocation; it may well infer, that therefore there should be so much more deliberation and care had in passing sentence upon capital matters than civil, by how much life is more precious and irrevocable than our worldly substance; but it can never infer that injustice should be tolerable in the one, not in the other. Justice had wont to be painted blindfold, with a pair of scales in her hand; wherefore else, but to imply that he who would judge aright must not look upon the issue or event, but must weigh impartially the true state of the cause in all the grounds and circumstances thereof, and sentence accordingly? To say then that a judge may pass a doom formally legal but materially unjust, because the case upon a new suit may be righted, were no other than to say, I may lawfully wound a man, because I know how to heal him again.

Shortly, therefore, whether it be in causes criminal or civil, whether concerning life or estate, let those who sit in the seat of judicature, as they will answer it before the great Judge of the world, resolve, what event soever follow, to judge righteous judgment; not justifying the wicked, not condemning the innocent; both which are equally abominable in the sight of the Almighty.

CASE VII.—"Whether, and in what cases, am I bound to be an accuser of another?"

To be an accuser of others is a matter of much envy and detestation, insomuch as it is the style of the devil himself to be *accusator fratrum*, an *accuser of the brethren*.

Yet not of his own brethren in evil. It was never heard that one evil spirit accused another; but of *our brethren*, Rev. xii. 10. It was a voice from heaven which called him so. Saints on earth are the brethren of the glorious spirits in heaven. It is the wickedness of that malicious spirit to accuse saints.

But though the act be grown into hatred, in respect both of the agent and of the object, yet certainly there are cases wherein it will become the saints to take upon them the person and office of accusers.

Accusation, therefore, is either voluntary or urged upon you by the charge of a superior.

Voluntary, is either such as you are moved unto by the conscience of some heinous and notorious crime committed or to be committed by another, to the great dishonour of God or danger of the common peace, whereto you are privy; or such

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as whereunto you are tied by some former engagement of vow or oath.

In the former kind, a worthy divine in our time, travelling on the way, sees a lewd man committing abominable filthiness with a beast. The sin was so foul and hateful that his heart would not suffer him to conceal it; he therefore hastens to the next justice, accuses the offender of that so unnatural villany: the party is committed, indicted, and, upon so reverend though single testimony, found guilty.

Or if, in the case of a crime intended, you have secret but sure intelligence that a bloody villain hath plotted a treason against the sacred person of your sovereign, or a murder of your honest neighbour, which he resolves to execute; should you keep this fire in your bosom it might justly burn you.

Whether it be therefore for the discovery of some horrible crime done, or for the prevention of some great mischief to be done, you must either be an accuser or an accessary.

The obligation to accuse is yet stronger where your former vow or oath hath fore-engaged you to a just discovery. You have sworn to maintain and defend his majesty's royal person, state, dignity, and to make known those that wilfully impugn it: if now you shall keep the secret counsels of such wicked designments as you shall know to be against any of these, how can you escape to be involved in a treason lined with perjury?

These are accusations which your conscience will fetch from you unasked. But if, being called before lawful authority, you shall be required upon oath to testify your knowledge, even concerning offenders of an inferior nature, you may not detract your witness, though it amount to no less than an accusation.

Yet there are cases wherein a testimony thus required, tending to an accusation, may be refused; as, in case of duty and nearness of natural or civil relation, it were unreasonably unjust for a man to be pressed with interrogations, or required to give accusatory testimonies in the case of parents or children, or the partner of his bed; or if a man, out of remorse of conscience, shall disclose a secret sin to you formerly done, in a desire to receive counsel and comfort from you, you ought rather to endure your soul to be fetched out of your body than that secret to be drawn out of your lips; or if the question be illegal, as those that tend directly to your own prejudice, or those which are moved concerning hidden offences, not before notified by public fame, or any lawful ground of injury, which therefore the judge hath no power to

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ask; in these cases, if no more, the refusal of an accusation, though required, is no other than justifiable.

But where neither the conscience of the horridness of a crime done, nor prevention of a crime intended, nor duty of obedience to lawful authority, nor the bond of an inviolable pre-engagement, call you to the bar, it is not a more uncharitable than thankless office to be an accuser.

Hence it is that delators and informers have, in all happy and well-governed states, been ever held an infamous and odious kind of cattle. A Tiberius and a Domitian might give both countenance and reward to them, as being meet factors for their tyranny; but a Vespasian, and Titus, and Antoninus Pius, and Macrinus, or whatever other princes carried a tender care to the peace and welfare of their subjects, whipped them in the public amphitheatre, and abandoned them out of their dominions, as pernicious and intolerable.

And as these mercenary flies, whether of state or of religion, are justly hateful next to the public executioners, so certainly those busy spirited men, which out of the itching humour of meddling run from house to house with tales of private detraction, may well challenge the next room in our detestation. This, together with the other, is that which God so strictly forbids in his law, Lev. xix. 16: *Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer amongst thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the Lord;* a practice which wise Solomon, though a great king, and, as one would think, out of the reach of tongues, cries down with much feeling bitterness, Prov. xviii. 8: *The words of the talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly:* no less than five several times in his divine proverbs[f] inveighing sharply, as if himself had been stung in this kind, against these close, backbiting calumniations.

Shortly, then, accuse when you are forced either by the foulness of the fact or the necessity of your duty; otherwise, reserve your tongue for better offices.

CASE VIII.—"Whether a prisoner, indicted of a felonious act which he hath committed, and interrogated by the judge concerning the same, may stand upon the denial, and plead, *Not guilty*?"

The casuists vary, and, out of respect to their own laws, are much perplexed in their resolutions; making the great scruple

[f] Prov. xi. 13; xx. 19; xxvi. 20, 22.

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to be in the juridical interrogations, which, if the judge have not proceeded in the due forms of law required in such cases, may warrant the offender's denial; and, secondly, making difference of the quality of the offence and danger of the punishment; which, if no less than capital, may, say they[g], give just ground to the accused party either to conceal the truth or to answer with such amphibolies and equivocations as may serve to his own preservation; in which course natural equity will bear him out, which allows every man to stand upon his own defence.

And the case, I perceive, is aggravated in foreign parts; as by the rack, so by an oath administered to the person accused, which they call *juramentum calumniæ*[h], which Lessius justly calls a spiritual torture, by the virtue whereof he is solemnly urged not to deny what he knows or believes to be true concerning the business questioned: a practice which I cannot blame Lessius[i], if he profess to wish that the pope and all secular princes would join together to abrogate, as being an evident occasion of much perjury.

To lay down and determine the case as it stands with us, in our ordinary proceedings of justice, it must be premised:

1. To deny a known truth, and to aver a wilful lie, cannot be other than a sin.

2. There is a vast difference betwixt concealing a truth and denying it.

3. It may be sometimes lawful to conceal some truths, though never lawful to deny or contradict them.

4. No man can be bound directly to accuse himself.

5. It is consonant to natural equity, that a man for the saving of his life should use the help of all evasions that are not sinful.

6. It cannot be sinful to put himself upon a legal trial in a case importing his life.

7. There is no place for a legal trial where there is an absolute confession of guiltiness.

These positions being prerequired, I say that it is lawful for the prisoner, though convinced in his conscience of the fact, yet to plead "Not guilty" to the indictment at the bar; forasmuch as he doth therein, according to the sense both of the judge and jury, only hide and keep back that truth, the finding out and eviction

[g] Rrodriquez. Tract. Ordinis Judicialis. cap. 10.

[h] Sotus l. v. q. 6. de Justitia [Injustitia] Rei. Art. 1.

[i] Less. de jur. l. ii. cap. 13. dub. 3.

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whereof lies upon their further search and proof; so as he doth, in pleading "Not guilty," in effect as good as say, "Whatever I find in myself, I have no reason to confess my guiltiness; I stand upon my lawful defence, and cast myself upon my just trial, yielding myself only so far guilty as your evidence and proofs can make me. Let justice pass upon me; I have no reason to draw on my own condemnation." The plea, thus construed, is lawful and just; wherein not the shuffling equivocations of the offender, but the upright verdict of a legal jury must carry the cause; to which purpose, that which sounds as a denial in the accused, is nothing else but a professed referring himself to a juridical trial of that fact which he is not bound to confess.

But when the hand of God hath once found out the man in his sin, and he finds himself legally convinced of his crime, it greatly behoves him, as Joshua charged Achan after the lot had discovered his sin, to give glory to God, in a free and full confession of his wickedness; and to be more open and ingenuous in his acknowledgment than he was close and reserved in his plea: wherein, as he shall discharge his conscience to that great and holy God whom he hath offended, so he shall thus tender some kind of poor satisfaction to that society of men whom he hath scandalized by his crime.

In which regard I cannot but marvel at the strange determination of learned Azpilcueta[k], the oracle of confessaries, who teaches, that the prisoner, who being rightly interrogated by the judge, stood stiffly in denial of the fact, and is upon his condemnation carried to his execution, is not bound at his death to confess the crime to the world, if he have before secretly whispered it in the ear of his ghostly father, and by him received absolution; a sentence that allows the smothering of truths, and the strangling of just satisfaction to those who are concerned, as patients, in the offence; and, lastly, highly injurious to public justice, whose righteous sentence is by this means left questionable and obnoxious to unjust censure. How much more requisite were it that a public confession should, in this case, save the labour of a private! whereby, certainly, the soul of the offender would be more sensibly unloaded, justice better vindicated, more glory would accrue to God, and to men more satisfaction.

But, however it be lawful for the accused to stand upon these points of legality in the proceedings against him; yet, for my own

[k] Mart. Azpil. Navar. Enchirid. cap. 25. num. 38.

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part, should I be so far given over as to have my hand in blood, and thereupon be arraigned at the bar of public justice, I should, out of just remorse, be the first man that should rise up against myself; and, which in other men's cases were utterly unlawful, be my own accuser, witness, and judge; and this disposition I should rather commend in those whose conscience hath inwardly convicted them for heinously criminous; that since they had not the grace to resist so flagitious a wickedness, they may yet endeavour to expiate it before men with an ingenuous confession, as before God with a deep and serious repentance.

Case IX.—"Whether, and how far, a man may take up arms in the public quarrel of a war?"

War is no other than a necessary evil; necessary in relation to peace, only as that without which so great a blessing cannot be had. As the wise woman said to Joab, 2 Sam. xx. 18, they should first treat with the men of Abel, ere they smite; and upon the charge of the Lord of hosts, (Deut. xx. 10,) conditions must first be tendered, even to heathen enemies, before any acts of hostility shall be exercised.

Where this, which is the worst of all remedies, proves needful, if you ask how far it is lawful to engage, I must ask you, ere I can return answer, first, of the justice of the quarrel; for surely where the war is known to be unjust, the willing abettors of it cannot wash their hands from blood. To make a war just, as our casuists rightly, there must be a lawful authority to raise it, a just ground whereon to raise it, due forms and conditions in the raising, managing, and cessation of it. That no authority less than supreme can wage a war it is clear in nature, for that none other besides it can have power of life and death; which both must lie at the public stake in war. That none but a just and weighty cause can be the ground of a war, every man's reason apprehends: for how precious a blessing had that need to be, that is held worth the purchasing with the price of so much blood! and how heavy a curse must that needs be, which can only be remedied or prevented by so grievous a judgment as war! That due terms and conditions are requisite to be offered ere war be undertaken, and observed in the managing and ceasing of it, humanity itself teacheth us; without which men should run upon one another with no less fury and disorder than beasts, not staying for any capitulation but the first advantage, nor terminating their discord

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in any thing but utter destruction. Where all or any of these are wanting the war cannot be just; and where it is known not to be such, woe be to those hands that are willingly active in prosecuting it. Now the care of all these three main requisites must lie chiefly upon that power which is entrusted by the Almighty with the overruling of public affairs; for the subject, as he is bound to an implicit reliance upon the command of the supreme power; so, unless it be in a case notoriously apparent to be unjust, must yield a blindfold obedience to authority, going whither he is led, and doing what he is bidden. But if the case be such, as that his heart is fully convinced of the injustice of the enterprise, and that he clearly finds that he is charged to smite innocence and to fight against God; I cannot blame him, if with Saul's footmen, when they were commanded to fall upon the priests of the Lord, he withhold his hand; and, craving pardon, show less readiness to act than to suffer.

In the second place, I must ask you with what intentions you address yourself to the field. If it be out of the conscience of maintaining a just cause, if out of a loyal obedience to lawful authority, I shall bid you go on and prosper; but if either malice to the parties opposed, and therein desire of revenge, or a base covetousness of pay, or hope and desire of plunder have put you into arms, repent and withdraw; for what can be more sordid or cruel than to be hired for days' wages to shed innocent blood? or what can be more horribly mischievous for a man, than to kill, that he may steal?

Upon your answer to these questions it will be easy for me to return mine. In a just quarrel, being thereto lawfully called, you may fight. Warrantable authority hath put the sword into your hand; you may use it. But take heed that you use it with that moderation and with those affections that are meet. Even an authorized hand may offend in striking. Magistrates themselves, if there be revenge in their executions, do no other than murder. Far be it from you to take pleasure in blood, and to enjoy another man's destruction: if, especially in those wars that are intestine, you shall mingle your tears with the blood which you are forced to spill, it may well become Christian fortitude.

Shortly, do you enter into your arms imprest or voluntary? If the former, you have nothing but your own heart to look unto for a fit disposition; that power whom you justly obey must answer for the cause. If the latter, you have reason diligently to

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examine all the necessary points of the power, of the cause of your intentions; as well considering that in a war it is no less impossible that both sides should be in the right, than that in a contradiction both parts should be true. Here therefore your will makes itself the judge of all three, and if any of them fail leaves you answerable for all miscarriages; so as you had need to be carefully inquisitive in this case upon what grounds you go; that so, whatsoever may befall, a good conscience may bear you out in the greatest difficulties and saddest events that are wont to attend upon war.

Case X.—"Whether, and how far, a man may act towards his own death?"

Directly to intend or endeavour that which may work his own death is abominably wicked, and no less than the worst murder.

For if a man may not kill another, much less himself, by how much he is nearer to himself than to another; and certainly if we must regulate our love to another by that to ourselves, it must follow that love to ourselves must take up the first room in our hearts; and that love cannot but be accompanied with a detestation of any thing that may be harmful to ourselves. Doubtless many that can be cruel to another are favourable enough to themselves; but never man that could be cruel to himself would be sparing of another's blood.

To will or attempt this is highly injurious to that God whose we only are; who hath committed our life, as a most precious thing, to our trust, for his use more than our own; and will require from us an account of our managing of it, and our parting from it. It is a foul misprision in those men that make account of themselves as their own, and therefore that they are the absolute lords of their life. Did they give themselves their own being? had they nothing but mere nature in them? can they but acknowledge an higher hand in their formation and animating? What a wrong were it therefore to the great Lord and giver of life, to steal out of the world without his leave that placed us there! But much more, if Christians, they know themselves, besides, dearly paid for; and therefore not in their own disposing, but in his that bought them.

Secondly, most desperately injurious to ourselves, as incurring thereby a certain damnation, for aught appears to lookers on, for ever, of those souls which have wilfully broken God's more

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easy and temporary prison, to put themselves upon the direful prison of Satan to all eternity.

Nature itself, though not enlightened with the knowledge of the estate of another world, found cause to abhor this practice. However the Stoical philosophers, and some high Roman spirits following their doctrine, have been liberal of their lives; the Thebans of old professed detestation of this worst of prodigalities; and the Athenians enacted, that the hand which should be guilty of such an act should be cut off, and kept unburied; and it was wisely ordained by that Grecian commonwealth, when their virgins, out of a peevish discontentment, were grown into a self-killing humour, that the bodies of such offenders should be dragged naked through the streets of the city; the shame whereof stopped the course of that mad resolution.

It is not the heaviest of crosses, or the sharpest bodily anguish, that can warrant so foul an act. Well was it turned off by Antisthenes of old, when in the extremity of his pain he cried out, "O, who will free me from this torment!" and Diogenes reached him a poniard wherewith to despatch himself. Nay," said he, "I said, from my torment, not from my life:" as well knowing it neither safe nor easy to part with ourselves upon such terms.

Far, far be it from us to put into this rank and file those worthy martyrs which, in the fervour of their holy zeal, have put themselves forward to martyrdom, and have courageously prevented the lust and fury of tyrants, to keep their chastity and faith inviolable. I look upon these as more fit objects of wonder than either of censure or imitation. For these, whom we may well match with Sampson and Eleazar, what God's Spirit wrought in them, he knows that gave it. Rules are they by which we live, not examples.

Secondly; however we may not, by any means, directly act to the cutting off the thread of life; yet I cannot but yield, with learned Lessius[1], that there may fall out cases wherein a man may, upon just cause, do or forbear something whereupon death may indirectly ensue. Indirectly, I say; not with an intention of such issue; for it is not an universal charge of God, that no man should, upon any occasion, expose his life to a probable danger; if so, there would be no war, no traffick; but only, that he should not causelessly hazard himself, nor with a resolution of wilful miscarriage.

[1] Less. de Jure l. ii. c. 9. dub. 6. [§ 27.]

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To those instances he gives, of a soldier, that must keep his station, though it cost him his life; of a prisoner, that may forbear to flee out of prison, though the doors be open; of a man condemned to die by hunger, in whose power it is to refuse a sustenance offered; of a man that latches the weapon in his own body to save his prince; or of a friend who, when but one loaf is left to preserve the life of two, refrains from his part, and dies first; or that suffers another to take that plank in a shipwreck which himself might have prepossessed, as trusting to the oars of his arms; or that puts himself into an infected house, out of mere charity to tend the sick, though he know the contagion deadly; or in a sea-fight blows up the deck with gunpowder, not without his own danger; or when the house is on fire casts himself out at the window with an extreme hazard; to these, I say, may be added many more; as the cutting off a limb to stop the course of a gangrene; to make an adventure of a dangerous incision in the body to draw forth the stone in the bladder; the taking of a large dose of opiate pills to ease a mortal extremity; or, lastly, when a man is already seized on by death, the receiving of some such powerful medicine as may facilitate his passage, the defect of which care and art the eminently learned lord Verulam[m] justly complains of in physicians. In these and the like cases a man may lawfully do those things which may tend, in the event, to his own death, though without an intention of procuring it.

And unto this head must be referred those infinite examples of deadly sufferings for good causes, willingly embraced for conscience' sake. The seven brethren in the Maccabees, alluded to by St. Paul to his Hebrews, Heb. xi. 35, will and must rather endure the butchering of their own flesh than the eating of swine's flesh, in a willing affront of their law. Daniel will rather die than not pray. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego will rather fall down bound into the fiery furnace sevenfold heated, than fall down before the golden image.

And every right disposed Christian will rather welcome death than yield a willing act of idolatry, rebellion, witchcraft. If hereupon death follow by the infliction of others, they are sinful agents, he is an innocent sufferer.

As for that scruple among our casuists, whether a man condemned to die by poison may take the deadly draught that is

[m] Εὐθανασία. Lord Verulam's "Advancement of Learning." [Book iv. c. 2.]

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brought him, it is such as wise Socrates never made of old, when the Athenians tendered him his hemlock; and indeed it may as well be disputed, whether a man condemned to die by the axe may quietly lay down his head upon the block, and not, but upon force, yield to that fatal stroke.

A juster scruple is, whether a man condemned to a certain and painful death, which he cannot possibly eschew, may make choice rather of a more easy passage out of the world. Wherein I marvel at the indulgence of some doctors, that would either excuse or mince the matter; for although I cannot blame that natural disposition in any creature, to shrink from pain, and to affect, what it may, the shifting from extremity of misery; yet for a Christian so to do it, as to draw a greater mischief to himself and an apparent danger to his soul, it cannot justly bear any other than a hard construction. For thus to carve himself of justice is manifestly to violate lawful authority; and while he would avoid a short pain, to incur the shame and sin of a self-executioner.

But if in that way wherein the doom of death is passed a man can give himself ease, or speed of dissolution, as when a martyr, being adjudged to the fire, uses the help of a bag of gunpowder to expedite his passage, it cannot be any way judged unlawful. The sentence is obeyed; the execution is accordingly done; and if the patient have found a shorter way to that end which is appointed him, what offence can this be either to the law or to the judge?

THE THIRD DECADE.

CASES OF PIETY AND RELIGION.

CASE I.—"Whether upon the appearance of evil spirits we may hold discourse with them, and how we may demean ourselves concerning them?"

THAT there are evil spirits is no less certain than that there are men. None but a Sadducee or an atheist can make question of it.

That evil spirits have given certain proofs of their presence with men, both in visible apparitions and in the possessions of

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places and bodies, is no less manifest than that we have souls whereby they are discerned.

Their appearances are not wont to be without grievous inconveniences, whether in respect of their dreadfulness or their dangerous insinuations.

It is the great mercy of the God of spirits, that he hath bound up the evil angels in the chains of darkness; restraining them from those frequent and horrible appearances, which they would otherwise make, to the terror and consternation of his weak creatures.

Whensoever it pleaseth the Almighty, for his own holy purposes, so far to loosen or lengthen the chains of wicked spirits as to suffer them to exhibit themselves in some assumed shapes unto men, it cannot but mainly import us to know what our deportment should be concerning them. Doubtless, to hold any fair terms of commerce or peace, much more of amity and familiarity with them, were no better than to profess ourselves enemies to God; for such an irreconcilable hostility there is betwixt the holy God and these malignant spirits, that there can be no place for a neutrality in our relation to them; so as he is an absolute enemy to the one, that bids not open defiance to the other.

As therefore we are wont, by our silence, to signify our heart-burning against any person, in that we abide not to speak unto those whom we hate, so must we carry ourselves towards evil spirits. And if they begin with us, as that devil did in the serpent with Eve, how unsafe and deadly it may be to hold chat with them appears in that first example of their onset; the issue whereof brought misery and mortality upon all mankind: yet then were our first parents in their innocency, and all earthly perfection; we now so tainted with sin, that Satan hath a kind of party in us, even before his actual temptations.

As therefore we are wont to say, that the fort that yields to parley is half won; so may it prove with us, if we shall give way to hold discourse with wicked spirits, who are far too crafty for us to deal withal, having so evident an advantage of us; both in nature, we being *flesh and blood,* they *spiritual wickednesses;* and in duration and experience, we being but of yesterday, they coetaneous with the world and time itself.

If you tell me that our Saviour himself interchanged some speeches with the spirits whom he ejected, it is easily answered, that this act of his was never intended for our imitation: sith his

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omnipotence was no way obnoxious to their malice; our weakness is.

I cannot therefore but marvel at the boldness of those men who, professing no small degree of holiness, have dared to hold familiar talk with evil spirits, and could be content to make use of them for intelligence; as the famous Jesuit in our time, Pere Cotton: who having provided fifty questions to be propounded to a demoniac, some concerning matters of learning, some other matters of state concerning the then French king and the king of England, and having them written down under his own hand to that purpose, being questioned concerning it, answered, that he had license from Rome to tender those demands; as I received it, upon certain relation, from the learned Dr. Tilenus, with many pregnant and undeniable circumstances which I need not here express. Although this need not seem strange to me, when I find that Navarre determines plainly, that "when evil spirits are present, not by our invocation, as in possessed bodies, it is lawful to move questions to them, so it be without our prayers to them or pact with them, for the profit of others; yea, thus to confer with them, even out of vanity or curiosity, is but venial at the most [a]." Thus he: with whom Lessius goes so far as to say, *Licitum est petere verbo a Diabolo, ut nocere desinat*, &c. "It is lawful to move the devil in words, to cease from hurting, so it be not done by way of deprecation, or in a friendly compliance, but by way of indignation [b]:" a distinction which I confess past the capacity of my apprehension; who have not the wit to conceive how a man can move without implying a kind of suit, and how any suit can consist with an indignation.

It savours yet of a more heroical spirit, which the church of Rome professeth to teach and practise, the ejection of evil spirits by an imperious way of command; having committed to her exorcists a power of adjuration, to which the worst of devils must be subject: a power more easily arrogated than really exercised. Indeed, this overruling authority was eminently conspicuous, not only in the selected twelve, and the seventy disciples of Christ who returned from their embassy with joy (Luke x. 17) that the devils were subject to them through his name, but even in their holy successors of the primitive church, while the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost were sensibly poured out upon men: but if they will be still challenging the same power, why do they not

[a] Navarr. Enchir. c. 11. n. 28. [b] Less. l. ii. de Magia. c. 44. dub. 6. [§ 45.]

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as well lay claim to the speaking of strange tongues? to the supernatural cure of all diseases? to the treading on serpents and scorpions? to the drinking of poisons without an antidote? Mark xvi. 17, 18: and if they must needs acknowledge these faculties above their reach, why do they presume to divide the Spirit from itself? arrogating to themselves the power of the greatest works, while they are professedly defective in the least. Wherein, surely, as they are the true successors of the sons of Sceva, who would be adjuring of devils by the name of Jesus whom Paul preached, so they can look for no other entertainment than they found from those demoniacs; which was to be baffled and beaten and wounded, Acts xix. 13—16.

Especially if we consider the foul superstition and gross magic which they make use of in their conjurations; by their own vainly-devised exorcisms feoffing a supernatural virtue upon drugs and herbs for the dispelling and staving off all evil spirits.

Because the books are not perhaps obvious, take but a taste in one or two.

In the "Treasure of Exorcisms[c]" there is this following benediction of rue, to be put into an hallowed paper, and to be carried about you and smelled at for the repelling of the invasion of devils[d]: "I conjure thee, O thou creature of rue, by the holy Lord, the Father, the almighty and eternal God, which bringeth forth grass in the mountains, and herbs for the use of man; and which by the apostle of thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ hast taught, that the weak should eat herbs: I conjure thee, that thou be blessed and sanctified to retain this invisible power and virtue, that whosoever shall carry thee about him, or shall smell to thee, may be free from all the uncleanness of diabolical infatuation; and that all devils and all witchcrafts may speedily fall from him, as herbs or grass of the earth; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, which shall come to judge the quick and the dead, and the world by fire." The like is prescribed to be done to the seeds of hypericon, or St. John's wort.

Add to this the horrible fumigation to this purpose, as it follows: "I conjure thee, O thou creature of galbanum, sulphur, assafœtida, aristolochium, hypericon, and rue, by the ✠ living

[c] "Thesaurus Exorcismorum, atque Conjurationum Terribilium, &c." Tract. "Dispersio Dæmonum," Fratris Valerii Polydori Patavini, Ord. Minorum Conventualium.

[d] Tit. Applicabile. 3. "Rutæ in charta benedicta super se portanda olfaciendæ, ad omnem invasionem diabolicam repellendam."

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God, by the ✠ true God, &c., by Jesus Christ, &c., that thou be for our defence; and that thou be made a perpetual fumigation, exorcised, ✠ blessed, and consecrated to the safety of us and of all faithful Christians; and that thou be a perpetual punishment to all malignant spirits, and a most vehement and infinite fire unto them, more than the fire and brimstone of hell is to the infernal spirits there, &c.[e]"

But what do I trouble you with these dreadful incantations, whereof the allowed books of conjuration are full?

To these I may add their application of holy water, wherein they place not a little confidence, which, saith Lessius[f], receives the force from the prayers of the Church, by the means whereof it comes to pass that it is assisted with divine power; which, as it were, rests upon it, and joins with it, to the averting of all the infestations of the devil.

But fain would I learn where the Church hath any warrant from God to make any such suit, where any overture of promise to have it granted. What is their prayer without faith? and what is their faith without a word?

But I leave these men, together with their crosses and ceremonies and holy relics, wherein they put great trust in these cases, to their better informed thoughts. God open their eyes, that they may see their errors!

For us, what our demeanour should be, in case of the appearance or molestation of evil spirits, we cannot desire a better pattern than St. Paul: his example is our all-sufficient instruction; who when the messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him fell presently to his prayers; and instantly besought God thrice that it might depart from him, 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8. Lo! he that could command evil spirits out of the bodily possession of others, when it comes to his own turn to be buffeted by them, betakes himself to his prayers to that God whose grace was sufficient for him, ver. 9. To them must we still have our recourse. If we thus resist the devil, he shall flee from us, James iv. 7.

In the primitive times, those that could command needed not to sue; and therefore fasting and prayer was an higher, as a more laborious work to this purpose in the disciples, than their imperative course of ejection: but for us, we that have no power to bid, must pray; pray, not to those ill guests that they would

[e] Applicabile. 15. Tit. "Profumigatio horribilis, ejusque vulgata benedictio."
[f] Less. ubi supra: Dubit 5.

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depart, not to the blessed Virgin, or our angel-keeper, that they would guard us from them, but to the great God of heaven, who commands them to their chains. This is a sure and everlasting remedy: this is the only certain way to their foil and our deliverance and victory.

Case II.—"How far a secret pact with evil spirits doth extend; and what actions and events must be referred thereunto?"

It is a question of exceeding great use and necessity; for certainly many thousands of honest and well-minded Christians are in this kind drawn into the snares of Satan, unwarily and unwittingly.

For the determining of it, these two grounds must be laid.

First, that there is a double compact with Satan: one direct and open, wherein magicians and witches, upon woful conditions and direful ceremonies, enter into a mutual covenant with evil spirits: the other secret and indirect, wherein nothing is seen or heard or known to be agreed upon; only by a close implication, that is suggested and yielded to be done, which is invisibly seconded by diabolical operation.

The second ground is, that whatsoever hath not a cause in nature, according to God's ordinary way, must be wrought either by good or evil spirits: that it cannot be supposed, that good angels should be at the command of ignorant or vicious persons of either sex, to concur with them in superstitious acts, done by means altogether in themselves ineffectual and unwarrantable; and therefore that the devil hath an unseen hand in these effects, which he marvellously brings about, for the winning of credit with the world, and for the obliging and engaging of his own clients.

Of this kind there is, too lamentably, much variety in common experience. Take an handful, if you please, out of a full sack.

Let the first be that authentic charm of the Gospel of St. John, allowed in the parts of the Romish Correspondence; wherein the first verses of that divine gospel are singled out, printed in a small roundel, and sold to the credulous ignorants, with this fond warrant, that whosoever carries it about him shall be free from the dangers of the day's mishaps:

The book and the key, the sieve and the shears, for the discovery of the thief:

The notching of a stick with the number of the warts which

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we would have removed: the rubbing of them with raw flesh, to be buried in a dunghill, that they may rot away insensibly therewith; or washing the part in moonshine for that purpose:

Words and characters of no signification or ordinary form, for the curing of diseases in man or beast: more than too many whereof we find in Cornelius Agrippa and Paracelsus:

Forms of words and figures, for the staunching of blood, for the pulling out of thorns, for easing pain, for remedying the biting of a mad dog:

Amulets made up of relics, with certain letters and crosses, to make him that wears them invulnerable:

Whistling for a wind wherewith to winnow, as it is done in some ignorant parts of the west:

The use of a holed flint hanged up on the rack, or bed's head, for the prevention of the nightmare in man or beast:

The judging by the letters of the names of men or women of their fortunes, as they call them, according to the serious fopperies of Arcandam:

The seventh son's laying on of hands, for the healing of diseases:

The putting of a verse out of the Psalms into the vessel, to keep the wine from souring:

The repeating of a verse out of Virgil, to preserve a man from drunkenness all that day following:

Images astronomically framed under certain constellations, to preserve from several inconveniences; as under the sign of the lion, the figure of a lion made in gold, against melancholic fancies, dropsy, plague, fevers; which Lessius might well marvel how Cajetan could offer to defend, when all the world knows how little proportion and correspondence there is betwixt those imaginary signs in heaven and these real creatures on earth:

Judiciary astrology, as it is commonly practised, whether for the casting of nativities, prediction of voluntary or civil events, or the discovery of things stolen or lost. For as the natural astrology, when it keeps itself within its due bounds, is lawful and commendable, although not without much uncertainty of issue, so that other calculatory or figure-casting astrology is presumptuous and unwarrantable, cried ever down by councils and fathers as unlawful, as that which lies in the midway betwixt magic and imposture, and partakes not a little of both:

The anointing of the weapon for the healing of the wound,

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though many miles distant; wherein how confident soever some intelligent men have been, doubtless there can be nothing of nature; sith in all natural agencies there must necessarily be a contaction, either real or virtual; here, in such an interval, none can be. Neither can the efficacy be ascribed to the salve, since some others have undertaken and done the cure by a more homely and familiar ointment. It is the ill bestowed faith of the agent that draws on the success from the hand of an invisible physician:

Calming of tempests and driving away devils by ringing of bells, hallowed for that purpose:

Remedy of witcheries by heating of irons, or applying of crosses.

I could cloy you with instances of this kind, wherewith Satan beguiles the simple upon these two misgrounded principles:—

1. That in all experience they have found such effects following upon the use and practice of such means; which indeed cannot be denied. Charms and spells commonly are no less unfailing in their working than the best natural remedies. Doubtless the devil is a most skilful artist, and can do feats beyond all mortal powers; but God bless us from employing him. *Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that* we *go to inquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron?* 2 Kings i. 3.

2. That there may be hidden causes in nature for the producing of such effects, which they know not, neither can give any reason of their operations; whereof yet we do commonly make use, without any scruple.

And why may not these be ranged under the same head, which they have used with no other but good meaning, without the least intention of reference to any malignant powers?

In answer whereto I must tell them, that their best plea is ignorance; which may abate the sin, but not excuse it. There are indeed deep secrets in nature, whose bottom we cannot dive into; as those wonders of the loadstone, a piece outwardly contemptible, yet of such force as approacheth near to a miracle; and many other strange sympathies and antipathies in several creatures; in which rank may be set the bleeding of the dead at the presence of the murderer; and some acts done for the discovery of witchcraft, both in this and our neighbour kingdom. But withal, though there be secrets in nature, which we know not how she works; yet we know there are works which are well known, that she cannot

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do: how far her power can extend is not hard to determine; and those effects which are beyond this, as in the forementioned particulars, we know whither to ascribe.

Let it be therefore the care and wisdom of Christians to look upon what grounds they go. While they have God and nature for their warrant they may walk safely; but where these leave them, the way leads down to the chambers of death.

CASE III.—"Whether, reserving my conscience to myself, I may be present at an idolatrous devotion; or whether, in the lawful service of God, I may communicate with wicked persons?"

The question is double; both of them of great importance.

The former, I must answer negatively. Your presence is unlawful upon a double ground; of sin, and of scandal: of sin, if you partake in the idolatry; of scandal, if you do but seem to partake.

The scandal is threefold: you confirm the offenders in their sin; you draw others, by your example, into sin; you grieve the spirits of those wiser Christians that are the sad witnesses of your offence.

The great apostle of the Gentiles hath fully determined the question, in a more favourable case, 1 Cor. viii. 4—10. The heathen sacrifices were wont to be accompanied, in imitation of the Jewish prescribed by God himself, with feasts; the owners of the feast civilly invite the neighbours, though Christians, to the banquets; the tables are spread in their temples; the Christian guests, out of a neighbourly society, go, sit, eat with them: St. Paul cries down the practice, as utterly unlawful. Yet this was but in matter of meat, which sure was God's, though sacrificed to an idol: how much more must it hold in rites and devices merely either human or devilish!

I need not tell you of the Christian soldiers in the primitive persecution, who, when they found themselves, by an ignorant mistaking, drawn under a pretence of loyalty into so much ceremony as might carry some semblance of an idolatrous thurification, ran about the city in a holy remorse, and proclaimed themselves to be Christians: nor how little it excused Marcellinus, bishop of Rome, from an heavy censure, that he could say he did but for company cast a few grains of incense into the fire. The charge of the apostle is full and peremptory, that we should *abstain from every appearance of evil*, 1 Thess. v. 22.

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It is a poor plea that you mention of the example of Naaman. Alas! an ignorant pagan; whose body, if it were washed from his leprosy, yet his soul must needs be still foul. Yet even this man will thenceforth offer neither burnt-offering nor sacrifice unto any other god but unto the Lord: nor upon any ground but the Lord's peculiar; and will therefore lade two mules with Israelitish earth; and is now a professed convert. "Yea, but he will still bow in the temple of Rimmon:" but how will he bow? civilly only, not religiously: in the house of Rimmon, not to the idol; not in relation to the false deity, but to the king his master. You shall not take him going alone under that idolatrous roof, but, according to his office, in attendance of his sovereign; nor bowing there, but to support the arm that leaned upon him. And if upon his return home from his journey he made that solemn protestation to his Syrians which he before made to the prophet; "Take notice, O all ye courtiers and men of Damascus, that Naaman is now become a proselyte of Israel; that he will serve and adore none but the true God; and if you see him at any time kneeling in the temple of your idol Rimmon, know that it is not done in any devotion to that false god, but in the performance of his duty and service to his royal master;" I see not but the prophet might well bid him *go in peace*. However, that ordinary and formal valediction to a Syrian can be no warrant for a Christian's willing dissimulation, 2 Kings v. 17, 18, 19.

It is fit for every honest man to seem as he is. What do you howling amongst wolves, if you be not one? Or what do you amongst the cranes, if you be a stork? It was the charge of Jehu, when he pretended that great sacrifice to Baal, *Search and look that there be here with you none of the servants of the Lord, but the worshippers of Baal only*, 2 Kings x. 23: surely, had any of God's clients secretly shrouded himself amongst those idolaters, his blood had been upon his own head. Briefly then, if you have a mind to keep yourself in a safe condition for your soul, let me lay upon you the charge which Moses enforced upon the congregation of Israel in the case of Korah's insurrection: *Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins*, Numb. xvi. 26.

The latter I must answer affirmatively: If the ordinances be holy, why should you not take your part of them?

It is an unjust niceness to abridge yourself of a blessing for another man's unworthiness. Doubtless there ought to be a sepa-

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ration of the precious from the vile; the neglect whereof is the great sin of those whom in duty it concerns to perform it; but where this is not accordingly done, shall I suffer for another's offence? My own sins may justly keep me off from God's table; if another man's may do so too, I appropriate the guilt of his sin to my own wrong. Surely it argues but small appetite to these heavenly viands, if you can be put off with a pretence of others' faults.

Judge of the spiritual repast by this earthly.

Were you throughly hungry, would you refrain from your meat because one of the guests hath a pair of foul hands? That may be a just eyesore to you, but no reason why you should forbear wholesome dishes; carve you for yourself, and look to your own trencher; he feeds for himself, not for you. Sin is the uncleanness of the soul, that cleaves closer to it than any outward nastiness can to the skin: to feed thus foul, then, is doubtless unwholesome to himself, it can be no hurt to you.

But you are ready to strain the comparison higher, to your own advantage: "Say that one of the guests hath a plague-sore running upon him; shall I then think it safe to sit at the table with him? Now sin is of a pestilent nature, spreading its infection to others besides its own subject; therefore it is meet we keep aloof from the danger of his contagion." True, there are sins of a contagious nature, apt to diffuse their venom to others, as there are other some whose evil is intrinsical to the owner; but these infect by way of evil counsels or examples, or familiar conversation, not by way of a mere extemporary presence of the person; by spreading of their corruption to those that are taken with them, not by scattering abroad any guilt to those that abhor them. Well did our Saviour know how deadly an infection had seized on the soul of Judas; yet he drives him not from his board, lest his sin should taint the disciples. The Spirit that writes to the seven Asian churches saw, and professed to see, the horrible infection spread amongst the Thyatirians by the doctrine and wicked practices of their Jezebel; yet all that he enjoins the godly party is, to hold their own, Rev. ii. 20, 21, 22, 25. *Have no fellowship*, saith the apostle, *with the unfruitful works of darkness*, Eph. v. 11. Lo, he would not have us partake in evil; he doth not forbid us to partake with an evil man in good works.

However therefore we are to wish and endeavour, in our places,

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that all the congregation may be holy; and it is a comfortable thing to join with those that are truly conscionable and carefully observant of their ways in the immediate services of our God; yet where there is neglect in the overseers, and boldness in the intruders, and thereupon God's sacred table is pestered with some unworthy guest; it is not for you, upon this ground, to deprive yourself of the benefit of God's blessed ordinances: notwithstanding all this unpleasing incumbrance, you are welcome, and may be happy.

Case IV.—"Whether vows be not out of season now, under the Gospel: of what things they may be made: how far they oblige us: and whether, and how far, they may be capable of a release?"

It is a wrongful imputation that is cast upon us by the Roman doctors, that we abandon all vows under the Gospel.

They well see that we allow and profess that common vow, as Lessius terms it, in baptism; which yet both Bellarmin and he, with other of their consorts, deny to be properly such. It is true that, as infants make it by their proxies, there may seem some impropriety of the engagement as to their persons; but if the party christened be of mature age, the express vow is made absolutely by and for himself.

Besides this, we allow of the renovation of all those holy vows, relating to the first, which may bind us to a more strict obedience to our God.

Yet more: though we do not now allow the vows of things in their nature indifferent to be parts of God's worship, as they were formerly under the Law; yet we do willingly approve of them as good helps and furtherances to us, for the avoiding of such sins as we are obnoxious unto, and for the better forwarding of our holy obedience.

Thus the charge is of eternal use: *Vow unto God, and perform it*, Ps. lxxvi. 11.

Not that we are bound to vow; that act is free and voluntary; but that when we have vowed we are straitly bound to performance. It is with us for our vows as it was with Ananias and Sapphira for their substance; *While it remained*, saith St. Peter, *was it not thine own?* Acts v. 4. He needed not to sell it, he needed not to give it; but if he will give he may not reserve: if he profess to give all, it is death to save some: he lies to the

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Holy Ghost, that defalks from that which he engaged himself to bestow.

It mainly concerns us therefore to look carefully, in the first place, to what we vow, and to our intentions in vowing; and to see that our vow be not rash and unadvised; of things either trivial, or unlawful, or impossible, or out of our power to perform; for every vow is a promise made to God; and to promise unto that great and holy God that which either we cannot or ought not to do, what is it other than to mock and abuse that sacred Majesty, which *will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain?* It is the charge, to this purpose, of wise Solomon: *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few,* Eccles. v. 2. Your vow therefore must be either of things morally good, for the quickening you in that duty which you are bound to do; or of things indifferent in themselves, the refraining or doing whereof may tend either to the restraint from sin or the furtherance of your holy obedience: as a man that finds his brains weak, and his inclination too strong to pleasing liquor, binds himself by a vow to drink no wine save only at God's table; or a man that finds himself apt to be miscarried by his appetite confines himself by his vow to one dish, or to one meal for the day; or a man that finds himself given to the pleasure of gaming, to the loss of his time and the weakening of his estate, curbs himself by his vow never to play for money; or a man that finds his prayers weak and his flesh rebellious, vows to tame his unruly desires, and to stir up his duller devotions by fasting.

And as the matter of your vow must be carefully regarded, so also your intentions in vowing; for if you vow to do good to an ill end, your thank is lost, and danger of judgment incurred. As, if you vow to give alms for vainglory or ostentation; or if God shall prosper your usurious or monopolizing project, you will build an hospital; your vow is like to be so accepted, as the story tells us[s] the prayers were of that bold courtezan, who coming to the shrine of S. Thomas of Canterbury, as that traitor was styled, devoutly begged that, through the intercession of that saint, she might be graced with so winning a beauty that might allure her paramours to a gainful courting of so pleasing a mistress; when

[s] Brom. Sum. Prædic.

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suddenly, as my author tells me, she was stricken blind: and certainly, so it might well be; for if a supposed saint were invoked, it was God that was highly provoked by the sinful petition of a shameless harlot; and it was most just for him to revenge it: and so we may well expect it shall be with whosoever shall dare to make use of his sacred name to their own wicked or unwarrantable purposes.

Since therefore our vows must be for their matter, as Casuists well determine, *de meliore bono*, and for intentions, holy and directed only to good, it plainly appears that many idle purposes, promises, resolutions, are wont to pass with men for vows, which have no just claim to that holy title. One says he vows never to be friends with such a one that hath highly abused him; another, that he will never come under the roof of such an unkind neighbour: one, that he will drink so many healths to his honoured friend; another, that he will not give the wall or the way to any passenger: one, that he will never wear suit but of such a colour; another, that he will never cut his hair till such an event. These and such like may be foolish, unjust, ridiculous self-engagements, but vows they are not; neither therefore do bind the conscience otherwise than as Sampson's cords and withs, which he may break as a thread of tow, Judges xvi. 9, 12.

But as for true vows, certainly they are so binding that you shall sin heinously in not performing them. It is no better than dishonesty to fail in what we have promised to men; but to disappoint God in our vows is no less that sacrilege. That of Solomon's is weighty: *When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better it is that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay it. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy vow, and destroy the work of thine hands?* Eccles. v. 4, 5, 6. If therefore a lawful and just vow have passed your lips, you may not be false to God and yourself in not keeping it.

But if it shall so fall out that there proves to be some main inconvenience or impossibility in the fulfilling of this your solemn promise unto God, whether through the extreme prejudice of your health and life or the overswaying difficulty of the times, what is to be done? Surely, as under the Law it was left in the power of the parent to overrule the vow of the child, Numb. xxx.

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3, 4, 5; so I doubt not but under the Gospel it is left in the power of your spiritual fathers to order or dispense with the performance of those vows which you would but cannot well fulfil. Neither was it spoken in vain, nor in matter of sins only, which our Saviour, in way of authorization, said to his apostles and their successors, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven*, Matt. xviii. 18. In this case therefore I should advise you to make your address to your spiritual pastor, and freely to lay open your condition before him, and humbly to submit yourself to his fatherly directions in that course which shall be found best and safest for your soul. Think it not safe, in a business of so high nature, to rely upon your own judgment, and to carve out your own satisfaction; but regard carefully what God hath said of old: *The priest's lips should keep knowledge; and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts*, Mal. ii. 7.

CASE V.—"Whom may we justly hold an heretic? and what is to be done in the case of heresy?"

There is no one point wherein the Church of God hath suffered more than in the misunderstanding of this question. How many thousand innocents have, in these latter ages of the Church, perished in this unhappy quarrel! yea, how many famous churches have been most unjustly thunderstruck with direful censures of excommunication down to the pit of hell, upon pretence of this crime, which have been less guilty than their anathematizers! And even amongst ourselves, how apt we are to brand one another with this hateful mark, where there is no true merit of such a reproach!

It much imports us therefore to know who may be deservedly thus stigmatized by us. I have elsewhere somewhat largely insisted on this theme; whither I might spare some lines to refer you. But, in short, thus: to let pass the original sense and divers acceptions of the word, an heresy is none other than an obstinate error against the foundation. All truths are precious, but some withal necessary. All errors are faulty, but some damnable: the heinousness of the error is according to the worth of the truth impugned. There are theological verities fit for us to know and believe; there are articles of Christian faith needful to be known and believed. There are truths of meet and decent

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superstructure, without which the fabric may stand; there are truths of the foundation, so essential as that without them it cannot stand. It is a maim to the house if but a tile be pulled off from the roof; but if the foundation be razed the building is overthrown: this is the endeavour and act of heresy.

But now the next question will be, what doctrines they are which must be accounted to be of the foundation.

Our countryman, Fisher the Jesuit, and his associates, will tell you roundly, that all those things which are defined by the Church to be believed are fundamental[h]; a large groundwork of faith!

Doubtless the Church hath defined all things contained in the Scripture to be believed; and theirs, which they call *catholic*, hath defined all those traditional points which they have added to the Creed, upon the same necessity of salvation, to be believed. Now if all these be the foundation, which is the building? What an imperfect fabric do they make of Christian religion: all foundation; no walls, no roof!

Surely it cannot, without too much absurdity, be denied that there is great difference of truths, some more important than others; which could not be, if all were alike fundamental. If there were not some special truths, the belief whereof makes and distinguisheth a Christian, the authors of the Creed Apostolic, besides the other symbols received anciently by the Church, were much deceived in their aim.

He therefore that believes the holy Scriptures (which must be a principle presupposed) to be inspired by God; and, as an abstract of the chief particulars thereof, professeth to believe and embrace the articles of the Christian faith; to regulate his life by the law of God's commandments, and his devotion by the rule of Christ prescribed; and, lastly, to acknowledge and receive the sacraments expressly instituted by Christ; doubtless this man is by profession a Christian, and cannot be denied to hold the foundation.

And whosoever shall wilfully impugn any of these comes within the verge of heresy; wilfully, I say; for mere error makes not an heretic. If out of simplicity or gross ignorance a man shall take upon him to maintain a contradiction to a point of faith, being ready to relent upon better light, he may not be thus branded; eviction and contumacy must improve his error, to be heretical.

[h] Relat. of the Third Confer. p. 6. [Lond. 1639. § 10. p. 27.]

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The Church of Rome therefore hath been too cruelly liberal of her censures this way, having bestowed this livery upon many thousand Christians whom God hath owned for his saints, and upon some churches more orthodox than herself; presuming upon a power which was never granted her from heaven, to state new articles of faith, and to excommunicate and bar all that shall dare to gainsay her oracles.

Whereas the great doctor of the Gentiles hath told us from the Spirit of God, that there is but *one Lord, one faith, one baptism,* Eph. iv. 5. And what faith is that? St. Jude tells us, *the faith that was once delivered to the saints,* Jude 3; so that as well may they make more reiterations of baptism, and multiplicities of Lords, as more faiths than one. Some explications there may be of that one faith made by the Church upon occasion of new sprung errors; but such as must have their grounds from forewritten truths, and such as may not extend to the condemnation of them whom God hath left free. New articles of faith they may not be, nor bind farther than God hath reached them.

Heretics then they are, and only they, that pertinaciously raze the foundation of the Christian faith.

What now must be done with them?

Surely, first, if they cannot be reclaimed they must be avoided. It is the charge of the beloved disciple to the elect lady, *If any man come unto you and bring not* (that is, by an ordinary Hebraism, opposes) *this doctrine, receive him not into your houses, neither bid him God speed,* 2 John 10. But the apostle of the Gentiles goes yet higher; for writing to Titus, the great superintendent of Crete, his charge is, *A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject,* Titus iii. 10.

Now when we compare the charge with the person, we cannot but find that this rejection is not a mere negative act of refraining company, but a positive act of censure; so as he who had power to admonish had also power to reject, in an authoritative or judicatory way.

He says then, *Devita, Reject* or *avoid,* not as Erasmus too truly but bitterly scoffs the Romish practice, *De vita tolle.* This, of killing the heretic, as it was out of the power of a spiritual supervisor, so was it no less far from the thoughts of him that desired to come *in the spirit of meekness.* Fagots were never ordained by the apostle for arguments to confute heretics. This bloody logic and divinity was of a much later brood, and is for a Dominic,

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not a Paul, to own; for certainly faith is of the same nature with love; it cannot be compelled; persuasions may move it, not force.

These intellectual sins must look for remedies of their own kind. But if either they be, as it is often, accompanied with damnable blasphemies against God, whether in his essence or attributes, or the Three Incomprehensible Persons in the all-glorious Deity, or the blessed Mediator betwixt God and man, Jesus Christ, in either of his natures; or else shall be attended with the public disturbances and dangerous distempers of the kingdom or state wherein they are broached; the apostle's wish is but seasonable in both a spiritual and a bodily sense; *Would to God those were cut off that trouble you,* Gal. v. 12.

In the mean time for what concerns yourself, if you know any such, as you love God and your souls, keep aloof from them as from the pestilence. Epiphanius[1] well compares heresy to the biting of a mad dog; which as it is deadly if not speedily remedied, so it is withal dangerously infectious; not the tooth only, but the very foam of that envenomed beast carries death in it; you cannot be safe if you avoid it not.

CASE VI.—"Whether the laws of men do bind the conscience, and how far we are tied to their obedience?"

Both these extremes of opinion concerning this point must needs bring much mischief upon church and kingdom. Those that absolutely hold such a power in human laws make themselves slaves to men; those that deny any binding power in them run loose into all licentiousness.

Know then that there is a vast difference betwixt these two; to bind the conscience in any act, and to bind a man in conscience to do or omit an act. Human laws cannot do the first of them, the latter they may and must do.

To bind the conscience is to make it guilty of a sin in doing an act forbidden, or omitting an act enjoined, as in itself such; or making that act in itself an acceptable service to God which is commanded by men. Thus human laws cannot bind the conscience, it is God only, 1 John iii. 20; who, as he is greater than the conscience, so hath power to bind or loose it. It is he that is the only Lawgiver to the conscience, Isa. xxxiii. 22; James iv. 12. Princes and churches may make laws for the outward man, but

[1] Epiphan. Hæres. l. i. [The only passage to which this reference seems to apply is in § 3, but no allusion is made to mad dogs.]

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they can no more bind the heart than they can make it. In vain is that power, which is not enabled with coercion: now what coercion can any human power claim of the heart, which it can never attain to know? The spirit of man therefore is subject only to the Father of spirits, who only sees and searches the secrets of it, and can both convince and punish it. Besides, well did penitent David know what he said when he cried out, *Against thee only have I sinned,* Psalm li. 4. He knew that sin is a transgression of the law, and that none but God's law can make a sin. Men may be concerned and injured in our actions; but it is God, who hath forbidden these wrongs to men, that is sinned against in our acts of injustice and uncharitableness, and who only can inflict the spiritual (which is the highest) revenge upon offenders. The charge of the great doctor of the Gentiles to his Galatians was, *Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage,* Gal. v. 1. What yoke of bondage was this, but the law of ceremonies? What liberty was this, but a freedom from the bondage of that law? And certainly if those ordinances which had God for their author have so little power to bind the conscience, as that the yoke of their bondage must be shaken off as inconsistent with Christian liberty; how much less is it to be endured, that we should be the servants of men, in being tied up to sin by their presumptuous impositions!

The laws of men therefore do not, ought not, cannot bind your conscience as of themselves; but if they be just, they bind you in conscience to obedience. They are the words of the apostle to his Romans; *Wherefore you must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake,* Rom. xiii. 5. However, then, their particular constitutions in themselves put no special obligation upon us under pain of sin and damnation; yet in a general relation to that God who hath commanded us to obey authority, their neglect or contempt involves us in a guilt of sin. All power is of God; that which the supreme authority therefore enjoins you, God enjoins you by it; the charge is mediately his, though passing through the hands of men.

How little is this regarded in these loose times by those lawless persons, whose practices acknowledge no sovereignty but titular, no obedience but arbitrary; to whom the strongest laws are as weapons to the leviathan, who *esteems iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood!* Job xli. 27.

Surely had they not first cast off their obedience to him that is

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higher than the highest, they could not without trembling hear that weighty charge of the great God of heaven; *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: and the powers that be are ordained of God*, Rom. xiii. 1: *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake*, 1 Peter ii. 13; and therefore should be convinced in themselves of that awe and duty which they owe to sovereignty, and know and resolve to obey God in men and men for God.

You see then how requisite it is that you walk in a middle way, betwixt that excessive power which flattering casuists have been wont to give to popes, emperors, kings, and princes in their several jurisdictions, and a lawless neglect of lawful authority. For the orthodox, wise, and just moderation whereof, these last ages are much indebted to the learned and judicious chancellor of Paris, John Gerson, who first so checked[k] that overflowing error of the power of human usurpation, which carried the world before it, as gave a just hint to succeeding times to draw that stream into the right channel; insomuch as Dominicus à Soto complains[l] greatly of him, as in this little differing from the Lutheran heresy; but *in the way which they call heresy, we worship the God of our fathers*, Acts xxiv. 14: rendering *unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God those things that are God's;* yielding our bodies to Cæsar, reserving our souls for God; tendering to just laws our active obedience; to unjust, passive.

But, in the mean time, far be it from us to draw this knot of our obligation harder and closer than authority itself intends it. Whatever popes may do for their decrees, certainly good princes never meant to lay such weight upon all their laws as to make every breach of them, even in relation to the authority given them by God, to be sinful.

Their laws are commonly shut up with a sanction of the penalty imposed upon the violation. There is an *obedientia bursalis*, as I remember Gerson calls it; "an obedience," if not of the person, yet "of the purse;" which princes are content to take up withal. We have a world of sins, God knows, upon us, in our hourly transgressions of the royal laws of our Maker; but woe were us if we should have so many sins more as we break statutes. In

[k] Tract. de Vit. Spec. lect. 4. cit. Dom. à Soto ut infra.

[l] *Gersonis positio parum distat ab hæresi Lutherana.* Dominic. à Soto De Jure, &c. l. i. qu. 6. [Art. iv. *Immo Gersonem sibi Lutherani contra catholicos patronum obtendunt.*]

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penal laws, where scandal or contempt find no place, human authority is wont to rest satisfied with the mulct paid, when the duty is not performed.

Not that we may wilfully incur the breach of a good law because our hands are upon our purse-strings, ready to stake the forfeiture. This were utterly to frustrate the end of good laws, which do therefore impose a mulct, that they may not be broken; and were highly injurious to sovereign authority, as if it sought for our money, not our obedience; and cared more for gain than good order; than which there cannot be a more base imputation cast upon government.

As then we are wont to say, in relation of our actions to the laws of God, that some things are forbidden because they are sinful, and some things are sinful because they are forbidden; so it holds also in the laws of men; some things are forbidden because they are justly offensive, and some other things are only therefore offensive because they are forbidden: in the former of these we must yield our careful obedience, out of respect even to the duty itself; in the latter, out of respect to the will of the lawgiver; yet so as that, if our own important occasions shall enforce us to transgress a penal law without any affront of authority or scandal to others, our submission to the penalty frees us from a sinful disobedience.

CASE VII.—"Whether tithes be a lawful maintenance for ministers under the Gospel; and whether men be bound to pay them accordingly?"

As the question of "mine" and "thine" hath ever embroiled the world, so this particular concerning tithes hath raised no little dust in the Church of God: while some plead them in the precise *quota parte* due and necessary to be paid, both by the law of God and nature itself; others decry them as a Judaical law, partly ceremonial, partly judicial; and therefore either now unlawful, or at least neither obligatory nor convenient.

What is fit to be determined in a business so over agitated, I shall shut up in these ten propositions.

1. The maintenance of the legal ministry, allowed and appointed by God, was exceeding large and liberal. Besides all the tithes of corn, wine, oil, herbs, herds, flocks, they had forty-eight cities set forth for them, with the fields round about them, to the extent of two thousand cubits every way. They had the

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first-fruits of wine, oil, wool, &c. in a large proportion: he was held to be a man of an evil eye that gave less than the sixtieth part. They had the firstborn of cattle, sheep, beeves, goats, and the price of the rest upon redemption; even the first-born of men must ransom themselves at five shekels a man. They had the oblations and vows of things dedicated to God. They had the ample loaves, or cakes[m] rather, of shewbread, and no small share in meat-offerings, sin-offerings, trespass-offerings, heave-offerings, shake-offerings: of sacrifices eucharistical they had the breast and shoulder; of other, the shoulder and the two cheeks: yea, the very burnt-offerings afforded them an hide. Besides all these, all the males were to appear before the Lord thrice a year; none were exempted, as their doctors tell us, but servants, deaf, dumb, idiots, blind, lame, defiled, uncircumcised, old, sick, tender and weak, not able to travel; and no one of these which came up might appear empty handed. What do I offer to particularize? There were no less than twenty-four gifts allotted to the priests expressly in the Law; the severals whereof whoso desires to see, may find in the learned and profitable annotations of Mr. Ainsworth, out of Maimonides[n].

2. We can have no reason to imagine that the same God, who was so bountiful in his provisions for the legal ministry, should bear less respect to the evangelical, which is far more worthy and excellent than the other. Justly therefore doth St. Paul argue from the maintenance of the one, a meet proportion for the fit sustentation of the other, 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14.

3. It is not fit for God's ministers to be too intent to matter of profit; their main care must be the spiritual proficiency of the souls of their people: the secular thoughts of outward provisions must come in only on the by. But howsoever they may not be entangled in worldly affairs, yet they ought in duty to cast so much eye upon these earthly things as may free them from neglect. It is to Timothy that St. Paul writes, that *If any man provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel*, 1 Tim. v. 8.

4. Under the Law the tenth part was precisely allotted, by the Owner of all things, for the maintenance of the sacred tribe; and if the wise and holy God had not found that a meet pro-

[m] Ten hand-breadths long, five broad, seven fingers high.
[n] H. Ainsworth in Lev. xxiv. 9. ex Maimonide.

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portion for those that served at his altar, he had either pitched upon some other or left it arbitrary. Yea, even before the Law, Abraham, and in his loins Levi himself, paid tithes to Melchisedec, the priest of the most high God, Gen. xiv. 20; Heb. vii. 4. And whether it were by his example or by some natural instinct, we find the very heathen nations, after some great victory achieved, were wont to devote still the tithe of their spoils to their deities: so Camillus, when he had after a long siege taken the rich city Veii, (a place of such importance, that, upon the taking of it, he wished some great cross might befall Rome for the tempering of so high a felicity,) he presently offereth the tithe to his gods[o]: yea, it was their custom who were most devout to consecrate the tithe of all their increase to those gods they were most addicted unto; insomuch as the Romans noted it in their Lucullus, that he therefore grew up to so vast an estate, because he still devoted the tithe of his fruits to Hercules; and Pliny tells us[p], that when they gathered their frankincense, none of it might be uttered till the priest had the tithe of it set forth for him.

5. There can be no good reason given why we may not observe the very same rate of proportion in laying out the maintenance of the ministry under the Gospel; and if these rules and examples be not binding, since religion consisteth not now in numbers at all; yet there is no cause why Christian kingdoms or commonwealths may not settle their choice upon the same number and quantity with both Jews and Gentiles.

6. The national laws of this kingdom have set out the same proportion of tenths for this purpose: if therefore there were no other obligation from the law of God or of the Church, nor any precedents from the practice of the rest of the world, yet in obedience to our municipal laws, we are bound to lay forth the tenth part of our increase to the maintenance of God's service; and that tenth is as truly due to the minister as the nine parts to the owner.

7. Since the tenth part is in the intention of the law, both civil and ecclesiastical, dedicated to the service of God, and in the mere intuition thereof is allotted to God's ministers, there can be no reason why it can be claimed or warrantably received by lay persons for their proper use and behoof; so as this practice of impropriation, which was first set on foot by unjust and sacrile-

[o] Ὄφρα Θεῷ δεκάτην, &c. Clem. Al. Strom. 1. [Paris, 1629. p. 349.]
[p] Plin. [Nat. Hist.] l. xii. [c. 14.] Bongus de num. Myster. num. 10.

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gious bulls from Rome, is justly offensive both to God and good men; as misderiving the well-meant devotions of charitable and pious souls into a wrong channel. Nothing is more plain than that tithes were given to the Church, and in it to God; how therefore that which is bequeathed to God may be alienated to secular hands let the possessors look.

8. Let men be tied to make good the apostle's charge, since the legal rate displeases; and it shall well satisfy those that wait upon God's services under the gospel. The charge of the apostle of the Gentiles is, *Let him that is taught in the word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things*, Gal. vi. 6; whereto he adds, *Be not deceived, God is not mocked*, vi. 7. The charge is serious and binding; and the required communication is universal, and that with a grave item of God's strict observation of performance. We may not think to put it off with Ambrose's mispointed reading, of referring the *all good things* to the teaching; a conceit sensibly weak and misconstructive: nothing is more evident than that it hath relation to the communicating; wherein, for aught I see, God intends a larger bounty to the evangelical ministry than to the legal: where all is to be communicated, what is excepted? All; not exclusive of the owner, but imparted by the owner. Let this be really done there will be no reason to stand upon the tenths.

9. But that this may be accordingly done, there is no law that requires a mere arbitrariness in the communicators. The duty of the teacher is punctually set down, and so well known, that the meanest of the people can check him with his neglect: and why should we think the reciprocal duty of the hearer fit to be left loose and voluntary? yet such an apprehension hath taken up the hearts of too many Christians, as if the contributions to their ministers were a matter of mere alms, which as they need not to give, so they are apt, upon easy displeasures, to upbraid. But these men must be put in mind of the just word of our Saviour, *The labourer is worthy of his wages.* The ministry signifies a service, a public service at God's altar; whereto the wages is no less due than the meat is to the mouth of him that pays for it. No man may more freely speak of tithes than myself, who receive none, nor ever shall do. Know then, ye proud ignorants, that call your ministers your almsmen and yourselves their benefactors, that the same right you have to the whole they have to a part: God, and the same laws that have feoffed you in

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your estates, have allotted them their due shares in them; which without wrong ye cannot detract. It is not your charity, but your justice, which they press for their own. Neither think to check them with the scornful title of your servants; servants they are indeed to God's Church, not to you; and if they do stoop to particular services for the good of your souls, this is no more disparagement to them than it is to the blessed angels of God, to be *ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation*, Heb. i. 14. Shortly, it is the apostle's charge ratified in heaven, that they which labour in the word and doctrine should be remunerated with double honour; that is, not formal,.of words and compliments; but real, of maintenance; which he lays weight upon his Timothy to enjoin, 1 Tim. v. 17.

10. And surely, how necessary it is that we should be at some certainty in this case, and not left to the mere arbitrary will of the givers, it too well appears in common experience: which tells us how ordinary it is, where ministers depend upon voluntary benevolences, if they do but upon some just reproof gall the conscience of a guilty hearer, or preach some truth which disrelishes the palate of a prepossessed auditor, how he straight flies out, and not only withholds his own pay, but also withdraws the contributions of others, so as the free-tongued teacher must either live by air or be forced to change his pasture. It were easy to instance, but charity bids me forbear. Hereupon it is that these sportulary preachers are fain to sooth up their many masters, and are so gagged with the fear of a starving displeasure, that they dare not be free in the reprehension of the daring sins of their uncertain benefactors; as being charmed to speak either *placentia* or nothing. And if there were no such danger in a faithful and just freedom, yet how easy is it to apprehend, that if, even when the laws enforce men to pay their dues to their ministers, they yet continue so backward in their discharge of them, how much less hope can there be, that being left to their free choice, they would prove either liberal or just in their voluntary contributions?

Howsoever, therefore, in that innocent infancy of the Church, wherein zealous Christians, out of a liberal ingenuity, were ready to lay down all their substance at the apostles' feet; and in the primitive times immediately subsequent, the willing forwardness of devout people took away all need of raising set maintenances

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for God's ministers: yet now, in these depraved and hardhearted times of the Church, it is more than requisite that fixed competencies of allowance should by good laws be established upon them; which being done by way of tithes in those countries wherein they obtain, there is just cause of thankfulness to God for so meet a provision, none for a just oppugnation.

CASE VIII.—"Whether it be lawful for Christians, where they find a country possessed by savage pagans and infidels, to drive out the native inhabitants, and to seize and enjoy their lands upon any pretence; and upon what grounds it may be lawful so to do?"

What unjust and cruel measure hath been heretofore offered by the Spaniard to miserable Indians in this kind, I had rather you should receive from the relation of their own bishop, Bartolomæus Casa, than from my pen. He can tell you a sad story of millions of those poor savages made away to make room for those their imperious successors: the discovery of whose unjust usurpation procured but little thanks to their learned professors of Complutum and Salamanca.

Your question relates to our own case: since many thousands of our nation have transplanted themselves into those regions which were prepossessed by barbarous owners.

As for those countries which were not inhabited by any reasonable creatures, as the Bermudas or Summer Islands, which were only peopled with hogs and deer, and such like brute cattle, there can be no reason why they should not fall to the first occupant: but where the land hath a known master the case must vary.

For the decision whereof some grounds are fit to be laid.

No nation under heaven but hath some religion or other; and worships a god, such as it is; although a creature much inferior in very nature to themselves; although the worst of creatures, evil spirits. And that religion wherein they were bred, through an invincible ignorance of better, they esteem good at least.

Dominion and property is not founded in religion, but in a natural and civil right. It is true that the saints have in Christ, the Lord of all things, a spiritual right in all creatures: *All things are yours*, saith the apostle, *and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's:* but the spiritual right gives a man no title at

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all to any natural or civil possession here on earth. Yea, Christ himself, though both as God and as Mediator the whole world were his; yet he tells Pilate, *My kingdom is not of this world:* neither did he, though the Lord paramount of this whole earth, by virtue of that transcendent sovereignty, put any man out of the possession of one foot of ground which fell to him either by birth or purchase. Neither doth the want of that spiritual interest debar any man from a rightful claim and fruition of these earthly inheritances.

The barbarous people were lords of their own, and have their sagamores, and orders, and forms of government, under which they peaceably live, without the intermeddling with other nations.

Infidelity cannot forfeit their inheritance to others, no more than enmity, professed by Jews to Christian religion, can escheat their goods to the crowns under which they live. Yea, much less; for those Jews, living amongst Christian people, have or might have had means sufficient to reclaim them from their stubborn unbelief; but these savages never had the least overture of any saving helps towards their conversion. They, therefore, being as true owners of their native inheritances as Christians are of theirs, they can no more be forced from their possessions by Christians than Christians may be so forced by them. Certainly, in the same terms wherein they stand to Christians, do also, in their judgment, Christians stand to them; and if it would seem hard to us, that an inundation of pagans should, as heretofore it hath done, break in upon us and drive us out of our native possessions, how could it seem less unjust in us to them?

Their idolatries and sins against nature are heinous and abominable; and such as for which God, of old, condemned the seven nations to an utter extirpation. But what commission have we for their punishment? Could we show such a patent in this case as the Israelites had for their wars against Amalek and those neighbouring heathens, all were sure; but you know who said, *What have I to do to judge them that are without?* 1 Cor. v. 12; and if he may not be a judge, who may be an executioner?

Refusal of Christianity can be no sufficient ground of either invasion or expulsion; sith violence is not the appointed way

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for plantation of the faith, which must be persuaded and not compelled.

That sentence, therefore, of pope Gregory[q], *Justum sanctumque esse bellum*, &c. ("That is a just and holy war which is by Christians made against infidels, that they, being brought under subjection, the gospel of Christ might be preached unto them; lest that if they should not be subjected, they might be an hinderance to preaching, and to the conversion of those that would believe;") is surely either not out of the chair or beside the cushion; and better beseems a successor of Romulus than of Peter.

I may not omit to acquaint you how hotly this main question was disputed by Spanish and Italian divines upon the very first entrance of this litigious usurpation: at which time pope Alexander the Sixth, anno 1493, gave his large decretory bull to Ferdinand, king, and Isabella, queen, of Castile and Arragon, for his expedition against the barbarous Indians of the then newly discovered world. Genesius Sepulveda, a learned Spaniard, writ then, in defence and encouragement of this holy invasion, a dialogue, which he called Democrates Secundus, which was published at Rome by the procurement of Antonius Augustinus, auditor of the palace; which no sooner came abroad than it was eagerly set on by the divines both of Italy and Spain. Amongst these latter, the doctors of Salamanca and the Complutenses, and above them, Antonius Ramirus, bishop of Segovia, fall foul upon that offensive discourse; which Genesius would fain have vindicated by an apology set forth to that purpose: but how insufficiently it were easy to show, if it were as needful. But to make the matter good, he thinks to back himself by the authority of great and famous persons, both counsellors and doctors by him cited; and above all, by that loud bull of Alexander[r]; wherein yet, for aught I see, the charge which is laid on those princes is only to reduce the people living in those islands and countries to receive Christian religion; which we may well apprehend more likely to be done by other means than by the sword. After much agitation, it pleased the king of Spain to require the judg-

[q] Greg. cap. *Per venerabilem.* et cap. *Si non.* 23. q. 4. *Justum sanctumque esse bellum, quod Infidelibus a Christianis infertur, ut eis imperio subditis prædicari possit Christi Evangelium; ne si imperio subditi non sint, prædicationi et conversioni eorum qui crediderint impedimento esse possint.*

[r] Decret. et indultum Alex. VI. super expeditione, &c. *Populos, in ejusmodi insulis et terris degentes, ad Christianam religionem inducere velitis et debeatis,* &c.

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ment of Francisco à Victoria[s], the famous professor of divinity at Salamanca, concerning this so weighty affair; which he hath published with such wisdom and moderation as so great a business required; stating the question aright on both sides; both showing the insufficiency of the received grounds of that Indian expedition, and directing to those just motives and rules of proceedings herein as might be in such a case justifiable: to which grave and solid discourse of his you may, if you please, be referred for further satisfaction.

Onwards I shall draw forth some few of such considerations from him as may serve for my present purpose.

First, therefore, it is lawful for Christians to travel into any country under heaven, and as strangers to stay there, without any wrong done to the natives; a thing allowed by the law of nations, derived from the law of nature; by which law it is every where held an inhuman thing to offer ill measure to a stranger. It is the argument that righteous Lot used to the worst of pagans, the Sodomites; *Only unto these men do nothing, for therefore are they come under the shadow of my roof*, Gen. xix. 8.

And if before the division of nations the earth lay freely open to all passengers without scruple to travel whither they pleased, surely that partition was never intended to warrant a restraint; and if nature have made the sea and all the inlets of it common, it were very injurious to abridge any nation of the free use of so liberal an element.

Secondly, it is lawful for us to use traffick with those infidels, and to interchange commodities with them, and to abide upon their coasts for negotiation, and to fish in their sea, and to take part of those profits which nature hath made common to all comers.

And if those pagans shall oppose us in so warrantable courses, it will be meet for us to tender them all fair satisfaction, persuading them that we intend no harm or prejudice to them in their persons or estate, but much good to both, labouring to win them by all courteous demeanour.

But if they shall fly out, notwithstanding all our kind endeavours, into a violent opposition of us, setting upon us in a hostile manner, offering to cut our throats in so unjust a quarrel; it is lawful for us to stand upon our defence, and to repel one force with another, and to use all convenient means for our security;

[s] Franc. à Victoria Relect. de Indis.

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and if we cannot otherwise be safe, to raise bulwarks or fortifications for our own indemnity; and if we find ourselves overpowered by implacable savages, to call for the aid and assistance of our friends; and if the enmity continue and proceed, of our princes: since the just cause of war is the propulsation of public injuries, and such injury is as great as barbarous.

But if not so much cruelty of disposition as fear and suspicion of a strange nation shall arm them against us, our care must be so to manage our own defence as may be least offensive to them; and therefore we may not take this occasion of killing their persons, or sacking their towns, or depopulating their countries; for that in this case they are no other than innocent.

If after all gentle entreaties, courteous usages, and harmless self defence, they shall persist in a malicious hostility, and can by no means be reclaimed from their impetuous onsets, there is now just cause not to deal with them as innocents, but as enemies, and therefore to proceed against them accordingly.

But an higher and more warrantable title that we may have to deal with these barbarous infidels, is for the propagation of Christian religion, and the promulgation of the gospel of Jesus Christ amongst these miserable savages; for which we have good ground from the charge of our Saviour, *Go preach the gospel to every creature*, Mark xvi. 15; and he that was in bonds for the name of the Lord Jesus tells us, *The word of God is not bound*, 2 Tim. ii. 9; not bound either in fetters or within limits.

O that we could approve to God and our consciences that this is our main motive and principal drift in our western plantations; but how little appearance there is of this holy care and endeavour, the plain dealer upon knowledge hath sufficiently informed us; although I now hear of one industrious spirit that hath both learned the language of our new islanders and printed some part of the Scripture in it, and trained up some of their children in the principles of Christianity; a service highly acceptable to God and no less meritorious of men.

The gospel then may be, must be preached to those heathens, otherwise they shall perpetually remain out of the state of salvation; and all possible means must be used for their conversion.

But herein I must have leave to depart from Victoria, that he holds it lawful, if the savages do not freely permit, but go about to hinder the preaching of the gospel, to raise war against them; as if he would have them cudgelled into Christianity.

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Surely this is not the way. It is for Mahometans to profess planting religion by the sword; it is not for Christians. It is a just clause therefore that he puts in, that the slaughters hereupon raised may rather prove a hinderance to the conversion of the savages, as indeed it fell out; the poor Indians being by these bloody courses brought into such a detestation of their masters, the Castilians, that they professed they would not go to heaven if any Spaniards were there.

The way then to plant the gospel of Christ successfully among those barbarous souls must be only gentle and plausible. First, by insinuating ourselves into them by a discreet familiarity and winning deportment, by an holy and inoffensive living with them, by working upon them with the notable examples of impartial justice, strict piety, tender mercy, compassion, chastity, temperance, and all other Christian virtues; and when they are thus won to a liking of our persons and carriage, they will be then well capable of our holy counsels; then will the Christian faith begin to relish with them, and they shall now grow ambitious of that happy condition which they admire in us; then shall they be glad to take us into their bosoms, and think themselves blessed in our society and cohabitation. Lo, this is the true way of Christian conquests; wherein I know not whether shall be the greater gainer, the victor or the conquered: each of them shall bless other, and both shall be blessed by the Almighty.

CASE IX.—"Whether I need, in case of some foul sin committed by me, to have recourse to God's minister for absolution; and what effect I may expect therefrom?"

A mean would do well betwixt two extremes: the careless neglect of our spiritual fathers on the one side, and too confident reliance upon their power on the other. Some there are that do so over trust their leaders' eyes, that they care not to see with their own; others dare so trust their own judgment, that they think they may slight their spiritual guides: there can be no safety for the soul but in a midway betwixt both these.

At whose girdle the keys of the kingdom of heaven do hang methinks we should not need dispute, when we hear our Saviour so expressly deliver them to Peter in the name of the rest of his fellows; and afterwards to all his apostles and their lawful successors in the dispensation of the doctrine and discipline of his Church; in the dispensation of doctrine to all his faithful

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ministers under the gospel, in the dispensation of discipline to those that are entrusted with the managing of church government.

With these latter we meddle not, neither need we, if we had occasion, after the so learned and elaborate discourse of the Power of the Keys, set forth by judicious Dr. Hammond, to which I suppose nothing can be added.

The former is that which lies before us.

Doubtless every true minister of Christ hath, by virtue of his first and everlasting commission, two keys delivered into his hand, the key of knowledge, and the key of spiritual power. The one, whereby he is enabled to enter and search into, not only the revealed mysteries of salvation, but also, in some sort, into the heart of the penitent; there discovering, upon an ingenuous revelation of the offender, both the nature, quality, and degree of the sin; and the truth, validity, and measure of his repentance. The other, whereby he may, in some sort, either lock up the soul under sin or free it from sin.

These keys were never given him but with an intention that he should make use of them upon just occasion.

The use that he may and must make of them is both general and special.

General, in publishing the will and pleasure of God signified in his word concerning sinners; pronouncing forgiveness of sins to the humble penitent, and denouncing judgment to the unbelieving and obdured sinner. In which regard he is as the herald of the Almighty, proclaiming war and just indignation to the obstinate, and tendering terms of pardon and peace to the relenting and contrite soul; or rather, as the apostle styles him, 2 Cor. v. 20, God's *ambassador*, offering and suing for the reconciliation of men to God, and if that be refused, menacing just vengeance to sinners.

Special, in particular application of this knowledge and power to the soul of that sinner which makes his address unto him.

Wherein must be inquired, both what necessity there is of this recourse, and what aid and comfort it may bring to the soul.

Two cases there are wherein certainly there is a necessity of applying ourselves to the judgment of our spiritual guides.

The first is, in our doubt of the nature and quality of the fact, whether it be a sin or no sin; for both many sins are so gilded over with fair pretences and colourable circumstances, that they

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are not to be descried but by judicious eyes; and some actions which are of themselves indifferent may by a scrupulous conscience be mistaken for heinous offences. Whither should we go in these doubts but to our counsel, learned in the laws of God; of whom God himself hath said by his prophet, *The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts*, Mal. ii. 7.

The second is, in the irresoluble condition of our souls after a known sin committed; wherein the burdened conscience, not being able to give ease unto itself, seeks for aid to the sacred hand of God's penitentiary here on earth, and there may find it.

This is that which Elihu, as upon experience, suggesteth unto Job on his dunghill; *The soul of* the remorsed *draweth near to the grave, and his life to the destroyers.* But *if there be a messenger* of God *with him, an interpreter, one of a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness* and the soundness of his repentance: *then is* (God) *gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down into the pit: I have found a ransom*, &c. *He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him: and he shall see his face with joy*, Job xxxiii. 22–26.

In case of some dangerous sickness of the body we trust not our own skill, nor some ignorant quack-salvers; but seek to a learned and experienced physician, for the prescription of some sure remedies: whereas if it be but for a sore finger or a tooth-ache we care only to make use of our own receipts. And so in civil quarrels, if it be only some slight brabble, we think to compose it alone; but if it be some main question importing our freehold, we are glad to wait on the stairs of some judicious lawyer, and to fee him for advice. How much more is it thus in the perilous condition of our souls! which as it is a part far more precious than its earthly tabernacle, so the diseases whereto it is subject are infinitely more dangerous and deadly.

Is your heart therefore embroiled within you with the guilt of some heinous sin? labour what you may to make your peace with heaven; humble yourself unto the dust before the Majesty whom you have offended; beat your guilty breast, water your cheeks with your tears, and cry mightily to the Father of mercies for a gracious remission: but if after all these penitent endeavours you find your soul still unquiet, and not sufficiently apprehensive of a free and full forgiveness, betake yourself to God's faithful agent for peace; run to your ghostly physician; lay your

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bosom open before him: flatter not your own condition: let neither fear nor shame stay his hand from probing and searching the wound to the bottom; and that being done, make careful use of such spiritual applications as shall be by him administered to you. This, this is the way to a perfect recovery and fulness of comfort.

But you easily grant that there may be very wholesome use of the ghostly counsel of your minister in the case of a troubled soul, but you doubt of the validity and power of his absolution; concerning which it was a just question of the scribes in the Gospel, *Who can forgive sins, but God only?* Our Saviour therefore, to prove that he had this power, argues it from his Divine omnipotence: he only hath authority to forgive sins, that can say to the decrepit paralytic, *Arise, take up thy bed, and walk:* none but a God can by his command effect this; he is therefore the true God, that can and may absolutely say, *Thy sins be forgiven thee,* Mark ii. 6—12.

Indeed, how can it be otherwise? Against God only is our sin committed; against man only in the relation that man hath to God: he only can know the depth of the malignity of sin who only knows the soul wherein it is forged: he only who is Lord of the soul, the God of spirits, can punish the soul for sinning: he only that is infinite can doom the sinful soul to infinite torments: he only, therefore, it must be that can release the guilty soul from sin and punishment. If therefore man or angel shall challenge to himself this absolute power to forgive sin, let him be accursed.

Yet withal it must be yielded, that the blessed Son of God spake not those words of his last commission in vain; *Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained,* John xx. 23: neither were they spoken to the then present apostles only, but in them to all their faithful successors to the end of the world.

It cannot therefore but be granted that there is some kind of power left in the hand of Christ's ministers both to remit and retain sin.

Neither is this power given only to the governors of the Church, in respect of the censures to be inflicted or relaxed by them, but to all God's faithful ministers, in relation to the sins of men: a power, not sovereign and absolute, but limited and ministerial; for either quieting the conscience of the penitent or further aggravating the conscience of sin and terror of judgment to the obstinate and rebellious.

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Neither is this only by way of a bare verbal declaration, which might proceed from any other lips; but in the way of an operative and effectual application, by virtue of that delegate or commissionary authority which is by Christ entrusted with them. For certainly our Saviour meant in these words to confer somewhat upon his ministers, more than the rest of the world should be capable to receive or perform.

The absolution therefore of an authorized person must needs be of greater force and efficacy than of any private man, how learned or holy soever; since it is grounded upon the institution and commission of the Son of God, from which all power and virtue is derived to all his ordinances: and we may well say, that whatsoever is in this case done by God's minister (the key not erring) is ratified in heaven.

It cannot therefore but be a great comfort and cordial assurance to the penitent soul to hear the messenger of God, after a careful inquisition into his spiritual estate and true sight of his repentance, in the name of the Lord Jesus, pronouncing to him the full remission of all his sins. And if either the blessing or curse of a father go deeper with us than of any other whosoever, although but proceeding from his own private affection, without any warrant from above; how forcibly shall we esteem the (not so much apprecatory as declaratory) benedictions of our spiritual fathers, sent to us out of heaven!

Although therefore you may perhaps, through God's goodness, attain to such a measure of knowledge and resolution as to be able to give yourself satisfaction concerning the state of your soul; yet it cannot be amiss, out of an abundant caution, to take God's minister along with you, and making him of your spiritual counsel, to unbosom yourself to him freely, for his fatherly advice and concurrence: the neglect whereof, through a kind of either strangeness or misconceit, is certainly not a little disadvantageous to the souls of many good Christians. The Romish laity makes either oracles or idols of their ghostly fathers: if we make cyphers of ours, I know not whether we be more injurious to them or ourselves. We go not about to rack your consciences to a forced and exquisite confession, under the pain of a no-remission; but we persuade you, for your own good, to be more intimate with and less reserved from those whom God hath set over you for your direction, comfort, salvation.

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CASE X.—"Whether it be lawful for a man that is not a professed divine, that is, as we for distinction are wont to call him, for a laic person, to take upon him to interpret the Scripture?"

Many distinct considerations had need to make way to the answer.

First, it is one thing for a man to interpret Scripture, another thing to take upon him the function of preaching the Gospel, which was perhaps in your intention. This is far more large than the other. Every man that preacheth interpreteth the Scripture, but every one that interprets Scripture doth not preach. To interpret Scripture is only to give the sense of a text; but to preach is to divide the word aright; to apply it to the conscience of the hearer, and in an authoritative way, to reprove sin, and denounce judgment against sinners; to lay forth the sweet promises of the Gospel to the faithful and penitent: for the performing whereof there must be a commission to God's minister from him that sends him; upon which the apostle hath pronounced a Τίς ἱκανός, *Who is sufficient for these things?*

Secondly, it must be considered in what nature and within what compass the interpretation is: for doubtless the just degrees of callings must be herein duly observed; whether in a public way, as pastors of congregations, or in a private way, as masters of families; whether in the schools, in a mere grammatical way, or in the church, in a predicatory.

Thirdly, it must be considered, as what the calling, so what the gifts are of the intérpreter: for surely mere interpretation doth not depend upon the profession, but upon the faculty of the undertaker; whether he be learned or ignorant; whether skilful in languages and arts (which certainly must be required in whosoever would put forth his hand to so holy and great a work), or whether inexpert in both. Where these gifts of interpretation and eminent endowments of learning are found, there can be no reason of restraining them from an exercise so beneficially edificatory to the Church of God; without which the truth of Christian religion had wanted much, both of her vigour and lustre, in all generations. How famously is it known that Origen, before his entering into holy orders, even at eighteen years of his age, entered into that great work of his catechisings! Apollos the Alexandrian *was an eloquent man, and mighty in Scriptures, and taught diligently the things of the Lord,* yet knew nothing

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but the baptism of John, till Aquila and Priscilla took him to task, and *more perfectly expounded to him the way of God,* Acts xviii. 24—26. And what happy use it pleased God to make of laic hands, for both the defence and propagation of the Gospel, we need no other witness than St. Jerome; who hath memorized amongst the primitive Christians, Aristides, Agrippa, Hegesippus, Justin, Musanus, Modestinus, both the Apollonii, Heraclius, Maximus, and many others, whom God raised up amongst the learned laity of those times to apologize for Christianity. And in the last foregoing age, how scarce removed out of our sight are Laurentius Valla, both the earls of Mirandula, Capnio, Fagius, Erasmus, Faber, and the rest of those famous waymakers to the succeeding restitution of the evangelical truth! And what a treasure in this kind had the Church of God lost, if it should have missed the learned annotations upon the Scripture derived to us from the hands of Mercerus, Joseph Scaliger, Drusius, both Casaubons, Tilenus, Grotius, Heinsius, Selden, and such other expert philologists, never initiated into sacred orders?

Fourthly, due and serious consideration must be had of the interpretation itself, that it be genuine and orthodox; for there can be nothing in the world more dangerous than to misconstrue God speaking to us in his word, and to affix upon his Divine oracles a sense of our own, quite dissonant from the intention of that Spirit of truth.

Care therefore must be taken that the interpretation given be every way conform to the analogy of faith, and fully accordant to other Scripture.

The neglect whereof, through either ignorance or misprision, hath bred many foul and perilous solecisms in divinity. To give you a taste of too full a dish: in the xviiith of Ecclesiasticus[t], where the Vulgar reads, "He that lives for ever created all things at once," some, and those no mean ones, of the ancient, followed also by later interpreters, have been misled into an ungrounded conceit of an instantany and entire creation of the world, and all the parts thereof, in the first moment of time; whereas the Scripture hath expressly and punctually set down the several six days wherein each part of it was distinctly formed; which those misconstruers are fain to understand of the distinct notifications given to the angels concerning this almighty work; and what curious subtleties have been hereupon raised by our

[t] Ecclus. xviii. 1. ὁ κτίσας τὰ πάντα κοινῇ.

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school-divines[u], is more fit to be past over with an unpleasing smile, than to be seriously recounted; whereas the intention of the place is only to signify that God made all things in the universal world that have any being; intimating, not the time of creation, but, as our version hath it, the generality of things created[x]. What advantage the blasphemous Arians have formerly taken from the misinterpretation of Proverbs viii. 22, where Wisdom is brought in, by the mistaking of some ancients, to say, *The Lord created*[y] *me*, instead of *possessed me, in the beginning of his way, before his works of old*, is more worthy of indignation than any farther prosecution. But most pregnant and notable is the gross misprision of a late famous schoolman, Franciscus d'Arriba, confessor to the late queen mother of France; who to maintain that new way of reconciling that scholastical difference among the Roman doctors, concerning the effectual aid of divine grace depending or not depending upon freewill, (about which he had sixty days' disputation with cardinal Ascoly and cardinal Bellarmin, showing how it might well be maintained without the devices of physical predeterminations, or that *scientia media* of our late Jesuits,) relies chiefly for his opinion upon that text of Isaiah xlv. 11: *Hæc dicit Dominus, Sanctus Israelis, qui fecit ventura*[z]*; Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, who hath made things to come;* following a misedition of the Vulgar, which perverts the sense by making a wrong stop in the sentence: whereas their own Montanus, and any other that hath but seen the Hebrew text, would read it, *Hæc dicit Dominus, Sanctus Israelis, qui fecit eum, Ventura interrogate me: Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, &c.:* referring the *ventura, things to come,* to the following *interrogate.* So Poza, the late extravagant doctor of Spain, in the maintenance of his novel opinions against Fathers and councils pressed against him, stands upon his defence out of the synod of Constantinople, Act. 5, grounded upon the words of miscalled Solomon; *Beatus, qui prædicat verbum inauditum*, Ecclus. xxv. 9, "Blessed is he, that preaches a word unheard of;" corrupting both the text and the council; whereas it should be read, *verbum inauditum obedientis;* and the council hath it aright, εἰς ἀκοὴν ὑπακούοντος; as ours turns it likewise, "Well is he, that speaketh in the ears of them that

[u] κοινῇ, *communiter.* Mont.
[x] Estii Annotat. in locum.
[y] Prov. viii. 22. קָנָנִי.
[z] Vulg. Tra. Isa. xlv. 11.

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will hear." It were easy to fill a just volume with instances of this kind.

To this purpose it will be requisite to make use of all those helps that may enable an interpreter to understand the Scriptures, whether those that are internal in itself or external from other supplies.

Of the former kind are a diligent sifting of the context and inference, and a careful comparing and conferring of one Scripture with another; for all truths agree with themselves, and this word of God is the sun that gives us light to see itself.

External; where it will be needful to call both for the aid of arts and tongues; and for the testimonies and judgments of reverend antiquity and the not to be neglected authority of modern doctors; and thirdly, a due regard of those golden rules of interpreting which are recommended to posterity by the learned pens of Clemens of Alexandria, Jerome, Augustin, Gerson, Hyperius, Illyricus, Jacobus Matthias, and others; which, as meet for a volume apart, may not expect to find a room in so concise a tractate.

The want and neglect of all which requisites, what strange work it must needs make with the simple and unlettered we may well conceive, when great clerks have hereupon bewrayed so foul and palpable miscarriage.

Albinus, the learned master of Charles the Great, writing upon John, finding it said of Judas, that *having received the sop he went immediately out; et erat nox, and it was night,* John xiii. 30, puts both together as spoken of Judas: "He," saith he, "was the night, that went out: as Christ is the day, that gives knowledge to his disciples, that were day too; so Judas, the night, gives knowledge to the Jews, that were night, of a traitorous wickedness, &c[a]."

What work Bernard[b], who showed in this that he saw not all things, makes of *Dæmonium meridianum*, "the noon-day devil," in one of his sermons, is evident to be seen; yet had he been as well seen in language as he was fervent in his devotion, he had spared that discourse, as raised from a mere ungrounded interpretation; there being no devil in the text, but a phantasm of his deluded imagination.

And if I should set forth the descants that our postillers run upon the names of Job's three daughters, I should seem to you as

[a] *Erat autem ipse nox.* [b] Ps. xci. 6. Bern. Serm. 33. [in Cant. § 9.]

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apt to sport in so serious a subject; and if I could think it worth the labour of gathering up the wide senses, far-fetched allegories, absurd inferences, that ignorant friars have fastened upon Scripture, it is not a small skin that would contain that tome.

Surely that man, whosoever he be, that would be hoising sail in these deeps of Scripture had need to be well ballasted, and well tackled, and skilful in the compass, else he will have much ado to escape a wreck. He that will walk in paths of danger had need to have his eyes about him: an hoodwinked man may easily be carried against a post; and he that hath not light enough to see his own way had need to take heed whom he trusts.

He that would blindfold follow those very interpretations which the Church of Rome hath commended for authentical, would run into foul and dangerous absurdities. Let me single out some few, confessed by their own Estius and Lucas Brugensis; such as are plainly contradictions to Scripture, and do as it were give the lie to God's Spirit.

Such is that 2 Sam. viii. 18: *Filii autem David sacerdotes erant; The sons of David were priests;* whereas every child knows that the Scripture frequently tells us none could be priests but of Aaron's order and tribe out of Levi's loins, and that David was of the house of Judah. The Septuagint rightly turns it αὐλάρχαι[c].

Again, who that shall find it in the Vulgar interpretation, *David desperabat,* &c. *David despaired* that he could escape from the face of Saul, would not infer that he utterly distrusted God's assurance, by the prophet, of his future kingdom; whereas the original is, by Estius's own confession, *festinabat;* as we also turn it, *David made haste to get away,* &c. 1 Sam. xxiii. 26.

He that should find it reported of one of the sons of Er, *qui stare fecit solem, he that made the sun to stand still,* 1 Chron. iv. 22, would justly wonder what kind of man this was that had been so long obscured from the world, and yet should have done so strange a miracle as never was done but by Joshua: whereas he that looks into the text shall find no mention at all of the sun, but only of the mere proper name of Jochim, the son of Er.

He that shall read in Job, where God speaks of the leviathan—*Cum sublatus fuerit* (i. e. leviathan) *timebunt angeli, et territi purgabuntur; When he raiseth up himself the angels shall fear,*

[c] The word in the original is מֹשְׁלִים, which every man knows to be used, ordinarily, to signify either *principes* or *sacerdotes;* as Exod. ii. 16.

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and being terrified shall be purged, Job xli. 25—would sure think this whale were the devil, as some ancients have mistaken him; and may well wonder how the good angels, being celestial spirits, could be capable of fear, or how the evil angels could be capable of purging; when the text hath no mention nor thought of angels[d]; but only signifying the strength and terribleness of the whale, expresses it in these words; *When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid; by reason of breakings they purify themselves.*

Solomon was faulty enough in his idolatry, but he that shall read, 1 Kings xi. 5, in the Vulgar interpretation, that he went after Chemosh the god of the Moabites, shall add one idol more to him than we find him guilty of.

Solomon was in his holy and regular times, 1 Kings iv. 32, full of heavenly meditations and divine ditties; but he that should follow the Vulgar interpretation would fasten upon him almost four thousand[e] more than ever he owned.

After that Merab, Saul's eldest daughter, was given to Adriel the Meholathite, 1 Sam. xviii. 19, contrary to engagement; he that will follow the Vulgar must say, that David straight fell in love with Michal, the other sister; whereas the text tells us, that Michal fell in love with him.

He that should find in the Vulgar construction,[f] that Saul sung all the day naked before Samuel in Naioth, would think his new prophesying had put him into a merry vein, 1 Sam. xix. 24: whereas the text only tells us, that he fell down stripped of his wonted clothes.

He that should find in the Vulgar, Psalm lxxi. 15, David reporting of himself *non novi literaturam, I know no learning,* would wonder at the prophet's disparagement of his skill, who had elsewhere professed himself wiser than his teachers; whereas all that he says is, that the mercies and blessings of God upon him have been so many that he knows not the numbers thereof[g].

He that should find the seven angels in the Revelation *vestitos lapide, clothed with stone*[h], would sure think them buried; whereas the text is, *clothed in pure white linen*[i].

[d] Where, doubtless, אֵילִים was mistaken for אֱלֹהִים, which title is sometimes given to the angels. [*Leusden* xli. 17.]

[e] *Quinque millia,* for *mille et quinque:* five thousand, for a thousand and five.

[f] *Cecinit,* for *cecidit.*

[g] The word is סִפְרוֹת *numeros.*

[h] Rev. xv. 6. λίθον ἔσσο χιτῶνα. Suid.

[i] ἐνδεδυμένοι λίνον, Rev. xv. 6.

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And what do you imagine would a plain reader think of that charge of the Wise Man, *Noli velle mentiri omne mendacium;* "Be not willing to lie all manner of lies?" Ecclus. vii. 13. Would he not straight say, "Some, belike, I am allowed to lie?" whereas the words are peremptory, even in Estius's reading, according to ours, "Use not to make any manner of lies."

Yea, that very correction of the Vulgar interpretation which Brugensis allows and magnifies, 1 Cor. xv. 51, with what safety can it pass the judicious, while he reads, *Omnes quidem resurgemus, sed non omnes immutabimur; We shall all rise again, but we shall not all be changed?* For how can those rise again that never died? how are those capable of a resurrection which are only changed? Whereas the just sense runs[k], according to our version, *We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed:* for those that are found alive at our Saviour's second coming shall not sleep in death; yet both they and the formerly dead must undergo a change.

I could utterly weary you with instances. How must he that reads the Apocryphal Ecclesiasticus needs say, that this man, how obscure soever in his authority, saw more and clearer than all the acknowledged prophets of the Old Testament! for he hath foretold us expressly the very name of our Lord Jesus, which none of them ever beforehand published; for he, speaking of the deep sea, is read in the Vulgar to say, *Plantavit illum Dominus Jesus,* "The Lord Jesus planted it," Ecclus. xliii. 23. I shame to think what sport a Jew will make of such a gross mistaking: wherein Ἰησοῦς, Jesus, is misread for νήσους, islands; so as the right sense is only this, "God, by his counsel, appeaseth the deep, and planteth islands therein."

But I forbear: only, if you have too much leisure, you may be pleased to cast your eye upon the margin[l].

[k] *ob* pro *obv.*

[l] Neh. vi. 2. *Percutiamus fœdus in vitulis, in campo uno:* for *in viculis, in campo, Ono.*—*Anni nostri sicut aranea meditabuntur;* Ps. xc. 9: for, *as a tale that is told.*—*Concupiscentia spadonis devirginabit juvenculam;* Ecclus. xx. 4. —*super,* for *subter;* Gen. xxxv. 8.—*vulnera,* for *ulcera;* Ex. ix. 9.—*distinctum,* for *bis tinctum;* Ex. xxxix. 28. —*sanctuarii,* for *sancto atrii;* Lev. vi. 16. —*tonsis,* for *tusis;* Lev. xxii. 24.—*neque,* for *atque;* Lev. xxv. 11.—*solis,* for *salis;* Deut. xxix. 23.—*non fuerit,* for *fuerit;* Jos. ii. 18.—*Occidentalem,* for *Orientalem;* Jos. xii. 3.—*hamata,* for *squamata;* 1 Sam. xvii. 5.—*vagi habitabunt,* for *pagi habitabuntur;* 1 Sam. xxvii. 8.—*Judam,* for *ludam;* 2 Sam. vi. 22.—*tumulum,* for *tumultum;* 2 Sam. xviii. 29.—*lapides seculi,* for *sacculi;* Prov. xvi. 11.—*ad alia,* for *ad alta;* Prov. xxvi. 2.—*sponsa,* for *speciosa;* Cant. ii. 13.—*adultera,* for

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In these and many more, for I meant to give you but an essay, the mistakes are important, and such as make no small change in the text: which I have therefore produced, that I might let you see how easy it is for a man that takes all things upon trust to be abused by his credulity; and how unsafe it is, much more for an unexpert and injudicious person, to meddle with the holy oracles of the Almighty [m].

The conclusion then must be, that however it may be lawful for the eminently learned, either in schools or families, according as their calling may warrant them, to interpret even difficult Scriptures, and to untie the knots of a text: yet, since not many are thus qualified, and those that are so qualified, if they neglect to follow the prescribed rules, may easily miscarry, to the great peril both of their own souls and others', I should therefore advise that this may be the act of but some few choice persons, and of them with all possible caution; and that ordinary Christians, if they have a desire, besides all fundamental truths which are laid down openly and clearly in the sacred word of God, to inform themselves in those darker verities which lie hidden in more

adulta; Ecclus. xlii. 9.—*infidelem,* for *fidelem;* Isa. xvii. 10.—*imitantes,* for *irritantes: terra,* for *ter;* Ecclus. xlviii. 2, 3.—*obsurduit,* for *obsorduit;* Isa. xxxiii. 9.—*imprudentem,* for *impudentem;* ib. v. 19.—*faunis ficariis,* for *fatuis sicariis;* Jer. l. 39.—*vinctas,* for *tinctas;* Ezek. xxiii. 15.—*ejiciat,* for *mittat;* Matt. ix. 38.—*angelus,* for *angulus;* Zech. x. 4.—*servivit,* for *servavit;* Hos. xii. 12.—*confessus,* for *confusus;* Mark viii. 38.—*sexta,* for *tertia;* Mark xv. 25.—*Mytelem,* for *Melita;* Acts xxviii. 1.—*compellebantur,* for *complebantur;* Luke viii. 23.—*placuerunt,* for *latuerunt;* Heb. xiii. 2.—*adduxistis,* for *addixistis;* James v. 6.—*in carne,* for *in carcere;* 1 Pet. iii. 19.—*appropinquabit,* for *appropinquavit;* 1 Pet. iv. 7.—*tubarum,* for *turbarum;* Rev. xix. 1.—*de igne Chaldæorum,* for *de Ur Chaldæorum;* Neh. ix. 7.

Of the fifty-three places above enumerated as faulty, the four following are not errors at all: Lev. xxv. 11, *neque* is agreeable to the Hebrew: Prov. xxvi. 2, *ad alia* is as consonant to the Hebrew as *ad alta:* Jer. l. 39, *faunis sicariis* is *faunis ficariis* in Sixtus's edition, and they are both obscure renderings of an obscure Hebrew word אִיִּים; but either of them is as good, if not better, than the author's *faunis fatuis:* Hos. xii. 12, *servivit* accords with the Hebrew, which *servavit* does not. The following eleven are errors found in the original edition of Sixtus, as the bishop has quoted them: viz 2 Sam. viii. 18; 1 Sam. xxiii. 26; 1 Chron. iv. 22; Job xli. 25; Ps. lxxi. 15; Ecclus. vii. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 51; Ps. xc. 9; Ecclus. xx. 4; Gen. xxxv. 8; Neh. ix. 7. The remaining thirty-eight are errors of the press, not found in Sixtus's edition.—By *Sixtus's edition* is to be understood the revision of that edition by Clement VIII. and not the edition published by Sixtus himself; for several of the errors censured by our author are to be found in Sixtus's own edition, but are corrected in the revision by Clement.—PRATT.

m In compiling the above formidable catalogue of errors chargeable on the Vulgate, the author has evidently used a very incorrect edition of that version; and he has hence, unwittingly, attributed many mistakes to the translation, which were mere errors of the press in his copy.

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obscure scriptures, to have recourse to their learned and faithful pastors, and rather to rest in that light which they shall receive from their well-digested instructions, than to rely upon their own (perhaps confident, but much weaker) judgment.

THE FOURTH DECADE.

CASES MATRIMONIAL.

Case I.—"Whether the marriage of a son or daughter without or against the parent's consent may be accounted lawful?"

Matrimony, though not a sacrament, yet a sacred institution of God, for the comfort and propagation of mankind, is so fruitful of questions, as that Sanchez[a], the Jesuit, hath stuffed an huge volume with them alone. It were pity that so many should, in that estate, be necessary.

We meddle not with those secret and (some of them) immodest curiosities; contenting ourselves only with those which meet us every day in the ordinary practice of men; whereof this which you have moved may well challenge the first place: a question wherein I was vehemently pressed in my late western charge by some persons of greatest eminency in those parts, upon occasion of some of their children undutifully carving for themselves in the choice of their matches. The offended parents, in the height of their displeasure, were very earnest to invalidate and annul the marriage. I gave them, in effect, the same account of the point which now I give to you, that this disallowed marriage was one of those things which are unjust and unlawful to be done; but, being once done, are valid.

How unwarrantable and injurious it is in the child to match himself without or against the parent's consent, there needs no other judge than the law of nature itself; which teacheth us, that the child is no other than the peculiar goods and living substance of the parent: yea, as some civilians[b] have taught us to express it, he is *pars viscerum matris*, "a part of the mother's bowels," and part of the purest substance of the father,

[a] Thom. à Sanchez. Societ. Jes. Theol. *De Matrimonio.* [Tomi tres.]

[b] Jacob. Leoniss. Consil. Matrimon. 49.

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and therefore ought no more to be exempted from the parent's power of disposing than the very limbs of his own body.

Upon this ground it was that by the law of God it was lawful for the Jews, in case of extremity, to sell, as themselves, so their children also, to servitude; but to those only of their own nation, Exod. xxi. 7; Deut. xv. 12, 13.

And in the law civil[c] there is the like permission, although under certain conditions; and particularly, in an utter exigency, *victus causa*. To the latter whereof some expositors[d] hold so strictly, as that they will not admit this to be done for the redemption of the parent from death or perpetual bondage, but only to preserve him from affamishing; wherein certainly they are over straitlaced, and too much wedded to syllables: it being questionless the intention of the law to comprehend all equally pressing necessities. To which they add, that this must be only in the father's power, and that to a child not emancipated and left to his own disposing. It is not in my way to dispute the case with them: take it at the easiest, it sufficently shows the great power that nature itself yields to the parent over the child. By how much stronger, then, the parent's interest is in the child, so much more wrongful it must needs be in the child to neglect his parents in finally bestowing himself; and if we look into the positive law of God we shall find the child so wholly left to the parent's will and disposition, as that he may, at his pleasure, dispense with or frustrate the vow of his child made to God himself, Numb. xxx. 3—6.

Neither do the Roman doctors[e] generally hold otherwise, this day, in case of an under-age. And some of them extend this power yet farther: yet not without a distinction; holding that, after the age of puberty, those vows only are in the mercy of the father, which may be prejudicial to the government of the family and paternal power: which is sufficient for my purpose in the question in hand.

And although those casuists do sufficiently doat upon their monkery, and the vows thereto appertaining, yet they ascribe so much to the bond of filial duty as that they teach[f], that a son, which, his parents being in extreme need and wanting his help,

[c] L. ii. c. *De patribus, qui*, &c.

[d] Covarruv. l. iii. var. c. 14, ex Accursio et aliis. [Francof. 1583, tom. ii. p. 121.] Less. l. ii. c. 5. Dub. 4. [§ 17.]

[e] Less. de Jure, l. ii. c. 40. dub. 14.

[f] Navar. Enchir. 4. præ. cap. 14. n. 14. *Filius, qui parentibus in extrema necessitate constitutis*, &c.

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enters into a religious order, or comes not out of it, though professed, when he might be likely by his coming forth to be aidful to his said parents, is guilty of a sin against the fifth commandment: so as even with them the respect to a parent ought to overweigh a vow of religion, although consummate by a solemn profession.

But that you may not object to me the age of the law, as therefore abrogated because Mosaical, hear what the Chosen Vessel says, under the new law of the Gospel.

If any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely towards his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let her marry; 1 Cor. vii. 36. *Neve theless he that standeth steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well,* &c. ver. 37. Lo, the apostle supposeth it in the parent's power, either to keep his daughter a virgin or to dispose of her in marriage; she is not her own, either to hold or give; but must be altogether ordered by the superior will of a parent. Not that any force is allowed either way to be used towards the daughter; whether to continue her in a constrained virginity or to cast her against her mind upon a disaffected match: no; that God, who disposeth all things sweetly, would have us do so too: he allows parents to be rulers of their children, but not tyrants. What they do, therefore, in this kind, must be more by counsel than command; and with more sway of love than authority. Thus, consulting wisely with the state of times, and the child's disposition and abilities of containing, must the parent either keep his virgin or labour for the provision of a meet consortship. Thus did the two great patriarchs of God's ancient Church, Abraham and Isaac, provide fit matches for their holy seed; while the unholy provided unfit matches for themselves. Thus did their godly issue, in all generations, take their parents along with them in the choice of meet yokefellows; while the godless, whether out of impetuous lust or stubborn disobedience, affect, with Esau, (Gen. xxviii. 6—8,) to be their own purveyors, to the great regret and heart-breaking of their parents.

Lastly, the latitude that St. Paul gives of the liberty of marriage to all Christians is, *Tantum in Domino; only in the Lord,*

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1 Cor. vii. 39. Now, how can that marriage be in the Lord which is against him? and how can that be other than against the Lord, which is against the Lord's commandment? and what commandment can be more express than, *Honour thy father and thy mother?* Eph. vi. 2; and, *Children, obey your parents?* vi. 1; and what can be more contrary to the honour and obedience due to parents, than to neglect them in the main business that concerns our lives? and what business can concern our life so much as the choice of a meet partner, with whom we may comfortably wear out all the days of our pilgrimage on earth?

Doubtless, then, we may, in a generality, safely conclude, that it is altogether unlawful for a child to slight his parent's consent in the choice of his marriage. There may be some particular cases incident, wherein perhaps this may without sin or blame be forborne: as, when the child, either by general permission or former elocation, shall be out of the parent's disposing: or where the parent is defective in his intellectuals: or where the child lives *in remotis,* out of the compass of intelligence: or where the parent, being averse from the true religion, denies his consent to match with any but those of his own strain: or shall, upon other by-occasions, wilfully stand upon so unreasonable terms, that neither friends nor authority can overrule him. But where these or the like preponderating exceptions do not intervene, the child cannot without sin balk the parents' consent to his choice in marriage.

But though such marriages, without or against consent, be not lawfully made; yet, being once made, they are valid. The civil laws, out of the grounds of policy, goes herein too far, which sentenceth those marriages void which are made without the consent of parents or guardians. But as matrimony hath something in it of nature, something of civility, something of divinity, as instituted by God, and by him to be regulated; so sure this last interest ought to oversway the other two. The marriage, therefore, thus made, being, though faulty, yet true, is doubtless after consummation indissoluble. The party's repentance and the parent's sorrow may have leisure to afflict them, no power to relieve them.

[s] *Matrimonia esse irrita,* &c. Instit. de Nuptiis, et ff. de Jure Nuptiarum. Ita et Evarist. in Constit. edita Anno D. 100.

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Case II.—"Whether marriage, lawfully made, may admit of any cause of divorce, save only for the violation of the marriage bed by fornication or adultery?"

Our Saviour hath so punctually decided the case, in his divine sermon upon the mount, that I cannot but wonder at the boldness of any man, who calls himself a Christian, that dares raise a question, after so full and clear a determination from the mouth of Truth itself: *Whosoever*, saith he, *shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery*, Matt. v. 32.

Yet I find this so evident an assertion checked by two sorts of adversaries: the one, certain wild Novellists, who admit of very slight causes of separation; the other, Romish doctors, who plead for some other main and important additions to this liberty of divorce.

I have heard too much of, and once saw a licentious pamphlet thrown abroad in these lawless times, in the defence and encouragement of divorces (not to be sued out; that solemnity needed not; but) to be arbitrarily given by the disliking husband to his displeasing and unquiet wife; upon this ground, principally, that marriage was instituted for the help and comfort of man: where, therefore, the match proves such as that the wife doth but pull down a side, and by her innate peevishness, and either sullen or pettish and froward disposition, brings rather discomfort to her husband; the end of marriage being hereby frustrate, why should it not, saith he, be in the husband's power, after some unprevailing means of reclamation attempted, to procure his own peace by casting off this clog; and to provide for his own peace and contentment in a fitter match?

Woe is me! to what a pass is the world come, that a Christian, pretending to reformation, should dare to tender so loose a project to the public! I must seriously profess, when I first did cast my eye upon the front of the book, I supposed some great wit meant to try his skill in the maintenance of this so wild and improbable a paradox; but ere I could have run over some of those too well penned pages, I found the author was in earnest; and meant seriously to contribute this piece of good counsel, in way of reformation, to the wise and seasonable care of superiors.

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I cannot but blush for our age, wherein so bold a motion hath been amongst others admitted to the light. What will all the Christian churches through the world, to whose notice those lines shall come, think of our woful degeneration in these deplored times, that so uncouth a design should be set on foot amongst us? Or how can they construe it other than a direct contradiction to our Saviour's sentence, in maintaining that practice which he expressly professeth to oppose?

For what was the Jewish guise here checked by our Saviour, but a voluntary repudiation of a lawful wife upon the terms of dislike other than fornication? Their misinterpretation of the law alluded unto argues no less. The law alluded unto is that of Deuteronomy, where God says, *When a man hath taken a wife, and hath been her husband, and it shall be that she find not grace in his eyes, because he hath found in her matter of nakedness*[h], *he shall write her a bill of divorcement, and send her away,* Deut. xxiv. 1: whereupon he infers, with an *ego dico, I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for fornication, causeth her to commit adultery.* The matter of nakedness, therefore, for which the Jews were then wont to divorce their wives, and offended in so divorcing them, was any other displeasing quality, besides the breach of wedlock through bodily uncleanness; for which only had they dismissed their wives, our Saviour had neither faulted their gloss nor their practice.

So as herein Christ, the giver of the law, decides one of those great controversies which were agitated between the emulous schools of Sammai and Hillel; determining, on Sammai's side, that for no other nakedness but that of adultery it was lawful to divorce a wife; and flatly condemning, by the like answer, that *πᾶσαν αἰτίαν,* (Matt. xix. 3,) *every cause* of repudiation then ordinarily received, as it was by the Pharisee purposely propounded unto him.

Answerable whereunto is that of the prophet Malachi, who, in our just reading, hath so fully decided the cause, as if it had been expressly referred to his umpirage: *The Lord,* saith he, *hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant,* Mal. ii. 14. Lo, the wife of thy covenant, therefore too surely settled to be turned

[h] עֶרְוַת דָּבָר

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off upon every slight occasion. What! was thy covenant to take her for thy wife till thou shouldest dislike her? What were this but to mock God and the world? Thy covenant implies no less than firmitude and perpetuity: *Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the Lord of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that you deal not treacherously,* Mal. ii. 15, 16. What is this treachery which the prophet cries out against thus vehemently thrice over with a breath, but pretended and unjust suggestions against a lawful wife, for her undue divorce? and what is that violence, but the injurious execution of those suggestions? upon which unsufficient grounds the Lord professes to hate putting away.

Yea, how apparently contrary is this practice to the very original institution of marriage itself! He that made it in paradise ordained thus: *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they two shall be one flesh,* Gen. ii. 24. Lo, before ever there was father or mother or son in the world, God hath appointed that the bonds betwixt husband and wife shall be more strait and indissoluble than betwixt the parent and child; and can any man be so unreasonable as to defend it lawful, upon some unkind usages or thwartness of disposition, for a parent to abandon and forsake his child, or the son to cast off his parent? much less, therefore, may it be thus betwixt an husband and wife. *They two are one flesh.* Behold here an union of God's making: a man's body is not more his own than his wife's body is his: and will a man be content to part easily with a piece of himself? Or can we think that God will endure an union made by himself to be slightly dissolved? Or how is this bodily matrimony a lively image of the spiritual marriage betwixt Christ and his Church, (who hath said, *I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies,* Hos. ii. 19,) if upon small occasions it may be subject to utter dissolution.

Yea, what speak I of divinity? Even modest heathens would hiss this libertinism off the stage. Amongst the rest what a fool was Socrates! The oracle, belike, called him the wisest man of his time; but what a fool was he to endure the unquiet clack of his

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Xantippe with such cool patience, if he might have quit himself of the trouble with a sudden act of her dismission? Or what use was there of those delegates of Athens, and the Harmosyni of Lacedæmon, for the piecing up of these domestic breaches betwixt husband and wife, if the imperious husband had power to right himself by turning the scold out of doors?

Lastly, what silly counsel was that which the Jewish rabbi gave to his client, matched with a shrew; "The bone that is fallen to thy lot, that do thou gnaw upon;" if it were altogether free for him to leave that bone and take another!

But I have dwelt too long on so gross a subject.

There may yet seem some better colour for the plea of the Romish doctors, which admit infidelity and heresy into the rank of those causes which may warrant a divorce.

But herein the ambiguity of the word, if heed be not taken, may deceive you. The Hebrew text, to which our Saviour alludes, uses a word which signifies *excision*, or *cutting off*[l]; the Greek, *a departing away*, or *putting off*[m]; the Latin, *divortium*, in his true sense is not so heinous as either of the other, signifying rather *a turning aside;* but in our ordinary acception amounts to no less than both. But what unjust difference they make betwixt final separation and dissolution, we shall find in our next discourse.

Onwards, that such separation may not be made of man and wife, lawfully joined together, for heresy or misbelief, we need no other conviction than that peremptory and clear determination of our Saviour, which we have formerly insisted on; for though his words on the mount were in the way of doctrinal assertion; yet afterwards the same words were used by him in way of a satisfactory answer to the Pharisees' question concerning causes of divorce; professedly resolving, that there could be no allowable ground of such separation, except fornication.

What words can be more plain? It is but a shift to say, as the cardinal doth, that our Saviour here meant only to express the proper cause of the separation of married persons, which is the breach of marriage faith; as having no occasion to speak of those general grounds which reach to the just sundering of all human societies; such as heresy and infidelity, which are enough to unglue all natural and civil relations betwixt father and son, master and servant, husband and wife; for it is clear, that neither question

[l] Deut. xxiv. 1. כְּרִיתֻת

[m] *βιβλίον ἀποστασίου.*

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nor answer were bounded with any particularities. The Pharisee asks, *Whether for every cause?* Our Saviour answers, *For no cause but fornication.*

And it is spoken beside the book, that child or servant should or may forsake parent or master in case of heresy or infidelity. S. Paul teacheth other doctrine: *Let as many servants as are under the yoke* (of bondage) *count their* (infidel) *masters worthy of all honour*, 1 Tim. vi. 1: not worthy, therefore, of desertion and disclamation. And if the servants may not shake off the bonds of duty, much less may the son break or file off the bonds of nature. And as for the matrimonial knot, how too sure it is to be loosed by infidelity itself, let the apostle speak: *If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him*, 1 Cor. vii. 12, 13.

And if even infidelity have not power to disoblige the wife or husband, much less heresy.

In this pretended case, therefore, to separate from board and bed, is no better than a presumptuous insolence. It is the peremptory charge of Christ, *What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder*, Matt. xix. 6. In all lawful marriages it is God that joins the hands and hearts of the married; how dare man then undo the work of God, upon devices of his own? Had the Lord ever said, "If thy wife be a wilful misbeliever, rid thy hands of her," this separation were just; but now that his charge is clean contrary, what an impious sauciness is it to disjoin those whom God hath united!

As therefore it is not in the power of any third person, upon any whatsoever pretence, violently to break the sacred bond of marriage; so neither may the husband or wife enthral each other by a wilful desertion whether upon pretext of religion or any secular occasion. In which case, what is to be done must come under a farther disquisition. Certainly, it was never the intention of the holy and wise God, by virtue of that which was ordained for man's comfort and remedy of sin, to bind him to a remediless misery; which must necessarily fall out, if, upon the departure of an unbelieving or heretical yokefellow, the relict party must be tied up to a perpetual necessity of either containing, if he can, or if he cannot, of burning. The wise doctor of the Gentiles well foresaw the dangerous inconvenience that must needs hereupon

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ensue, and hath given order for prevention accordingly: *But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace,* 1 Cor. vii. 15. Not that it is free for a man or woman so forsaken to carve him or herself of redress: what an infinite confusion would follow upon such licentiousness! but that, after long and patient expectation, and all probable means used for the reduction of the party deserting, recourse be had, as to the last refuge, to public ecclesiastical authority, which is the fittest to manage these matrimonial affairs; in whose power it may be, either by grave admonitions and just censures, to bring back the offender to his duty; or upon his continuing contempt, to set a day for the publication of the just freedom of the forsaken; wherein they shall do no other than execute that apostolic sentence for exemption from an unjust bondage and providing for a just peace.

CASE III.—"Whether after a lawful divorce for adultery the innocent party may marry again?"

Although matrimony be not, according to the Romish tenet, one of those sacraments which imprint an indelible character in the receiver; yet it hath, as they hold, such a secret influence upon the soul, as that it leaves a perpetual bond behind it never to be dissolved till death; so as those offenders which, by just censure, are separated from the board and the bed, cannot yet be freed from the bond of marriage.

Upon this ground it is that they bar the innocent party from the benefit of a second marriage, as supposing the obligation of the former still in force.

In the ordinary bills of the Jewish divorce, the repudiated wife had full scope given her of a second choice; as the words ran: "She was to be free, and to have power over her own soul; to go away; to be married to any man whom she would[n]." They were not more liberal than our Romish divorcers are niggardly. The Jewish divorce being upon unwarrantable cause, made their liberality so much more sinful as their divorce was more unjust; for the divorced woman was still, in right, the lawful wife of that unrighteous husband that dismissed her. The Romish doctrine makes their straithandedness so much more injurious, as the cause of separation is more just.

[n] Maimon. Treat. of Divorce.

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Even this question also is expressly determined by our Saviour in his answer to the Pharisees; *Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and marrieth another, committeth adultery,* Matt. xix. 9. Lo then, he that for so just a cause as fornication putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth not adultery. The exception manifestly implies so much, both in reason and common use.

Neither indeed are the words capable of any other probable sense.

That which Bellarmin would fasten upon it, referring the exception to the former clause of dismission only, so as it might be lawful to divorce only for fornication, but not to marry after divorce, cannot stand without the supply of words of his own, which God never allowed him to intersert; and besides, utterly destroys the sense, casting such doctrine upon our Saviour as he would hate to own; for except that restraint be referred to the marrying again, the sense would run thus, "Whosoever puts away his wife commits adultery," which stands not with truth or reason; sith it is not the dismission that is adulterous, but the marriage of another. It is therefore the plain drift of our Saviour to teach the Pharisee, that the marriage of a second wife (after dismission of a former, upon any other cause except for fornication) is no less than adultery; thereby enforcing, that upon a just dismission for fornication a second marriage cannot be branded with adultery.

Neither will it serve his turn, which he would borrow from St. Augustin, that upon this negative of our Saviour's we may not look to build an affirmative of our own: for though it be granted, that he who putting away his wife not for fornication marrieth another, sinneth; yet it follows not, that he who having dismissed his wife for fornication marrieth another, sinneth not at all. A sin it may be, though not an adultery: for surely, if it be a sin, it must be against a commandment; and if against any commandment, it must be against the seventh; and what is the seventh commandment, but *Thou shalt not commit adultery?* Besides, the Pharisees' question, *Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?* was not without a plain implication of liberty to marry another; which our Saviour well knowing, gives a full answer, as well to what he meant as what he said; which had not been perfectly satisfactory, if he had only determined that one part concerning dismission, and not the other

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concerning marriage: which clause, if two other evangelists express not, yet it must be fetched necessarily from the third; since it is a sure and irrefragable rule, "That all four evangelists make up one perfect Gospel." It is therefore a very tottering and unsure ground which our Rhemists build upon, as if the apostle meant to cross his Lord and Master, when he saith, *The woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth*, Rom. vii. 2; therefore only death can dissolve the bond of marriage, not divorce; not adultery; not divorce for adultery. For how plainly do the words carry their answer in themselves! *The woman*, saith the apostle, *that hath an husband*[o]; but the woman legally divorced for fornication hath no husband. S. Paul speaks of a true wife, not a divorced harlot. He had no occasion here to look aside at matter of divorce, but takes marriage as in its entire right; rather desiring to urge, for clearing the case of our obligation to the law, that the husband being once dead the wife is free to marry again, than to intimate the case of her incapacity to marry till he be dead.

As for that bond therefore which is so much stood upon, if it be taken without all relations to the duties of bed and board, it is merely chimerical, nothing but fantasy. There are or should be bonds of affection, bonds of mutual respects and reciprocal duties, betwixt man and wife; and these must hold firm notwithstanding any local separation; neither time nor place may so much as slacken, much less loose them: but where a just divorce intervenes these bonds are chopped in pieces, and no more are than if they had never been. And if all relations cease in death, as they do in whatsoever kind, surely divorce, being, as it is, no other than a legal death, doth utterly cut off, as the Hebrew term imports, all former obligations and respects betwixt the parties so finally separated.

The adulterous wife therefore, duly divorced, being thus dead in law as to her husband, the husband stands now as free as if he had never married; so as I know not why the apostle should not as well speak to him as to any other, when he saith, *Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife*, 1 Cor. vii. 2.

Neither is it otherwise in the case of a chaste wife after her separation from an adulterous husband, Mark x. 12. In these rights God makes no difference of sexes; both may lawfully claim

[o] So also 1 Cor. vii. 39.

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the same immunities; which certainly, should they be denied to either, must needs draw on very great inconveniences; for in how hard a condition should the innocent party be hereupon left! Either the husband or wife must be forced to live with an adulterous consort, or be tied to a perpetual necessity of either doing that which perhaps they cannot do, containing, or of suffering that which they ought not to endure, burning.

What remedy now can be expected of so great a mischief? Our Romish doctors propose two: reconciliation or continence: both good, where they may be had.

Reconciliation, in case of a seasonable and submiss repentance: that which is the apostle's charge in case of desertion, holds here also; *καταλλαγήτω, let her be reconciled;* the more heinous the wrong is, the more commendable is the remission.

Continence, after such separation, in case of ability so granted: for surely this holy disposition is a gift, and therefore is not had where it is not bestowed: those that place it in our power derogate from the thanks of the Giver; yea, he that gives it tells us *all cannot receive it*, Matt. xix. 11: he must not only give it, but give us power to take it.

But where the offending party is obstinately vicious, and the innocent, after all endeavours, unable to contain without a supply of marriage, the case is remediless; and we know God's mercy such as that he leaves no man, for matter of resolution, utterly perplexed.

Shortly then, I doubt not but I may, notwithstanding great authorities to the contrary, safely resolve that in the case of divorce it is lawful for the innocent person to marry. But for that I find the Church of England hitherto somewhat tender in the point[p]; and this practice, where it rarely falls, generally held, though not sinful, yet of ill report, and obnoxious to various censures; I should therefore earnestly advise and exhort those whom it may concern carefully and effectually to apply themselves to the forementioned remedies: reconciliation, if it be possible, to prevent a divorce; holy endeavours of a continued continence, if it may be obtained, to prevent a second marriage after divorce. But if these prevail not, I dare not lay a load upon any man's conscience which God hath not burdened; I dare not ensnare those whom God will have free.

[p] Decreeing to take bonds of the persons divorced to remain single. Can. et Constit. c. 107.

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CASE IV.—"Whether the authority of a father may reach so far as to command or compel the child to dispose of himself in marriage where he shall appoint?"

The extent of a paternal power, as we have partly showed already, hath been wont to be very large, reaching in some cases by the civil law to the life of the child, and by the Jewish law to his liberty; so as it might seem much more overruling in case of marriage! which also seems to be intimated by the apostle, in that he supposes and gives a power to the parent either to give or keep his virgin.

And how apt parents are to make use of this awful authority in matching their children for their own worldly advantage, contrary to their affections and disposition, we have too lamentable experience every day.

Neither is it easy to set forth the mischievous effects that have followed upon those compelled marriages: for hence ensue perpetual discontentments to the parties so forcedly conjoined; an utter frustration of the end of marriage, which should be mutual comfort; and, not seldom, dangerous machinations against the life of the disaffected consort; as it were too easy to instance every where. But especially if the affections of the young couple have been before, as it oft falls out, placed elsewhere, what secret heartburnings, what loathing of conjugal society, what adulterous plottings, do straight follow! what unkind defiances pass between them! how do they wear out their days in a melancholic pining, and wish each other and themselves dead too soon!

Yea, herein an imperious or covetous parent may be most injurious to himself, in robbing himself of that comfort which he might receive from a dutiful child, in her person, in her posterity.

For the avoiding of which mischiefs, it were meet and happy that both parent and child could both know their limits, which God and nature hath set, and keep them.

Let the child then know that he is his parents'; that as he was once a part of them in respect of his natural being, so he should be still in his affections and obsequiousness; and therefore that he ought to labour by all means to bring his heart unto a conformity to his parents' will and desire, according to that universal rule of the apostle, *Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is wellpleasing unto the Lord,* Col. iii. 20. The word is comprehensive: *in all things.* Things unlawful pass for impossible; we only can do what we ought. In all those things

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then which are honest, lawful, just, parents must be obeyed; and the motions for marriage being such, impose upon the child so far a duty of obedience as that he is bound to work his affections, what he may, to a compliance with his parents' will; the wilful neglect whereof is no better than a kind of domestic rebellion.

Let the parent again consider that the child, however derived from his loins, is now an entire person in himself: that though the body came from him, yet the soul was from above: that the soul of his child is endowed with powers and faculties of its own: that, as he is not animated by his parents' spirit, so he is not inwardly swayed by his parent's will or affections: that when his reason comes to be improved, there may be differences of judgment betwixt his parent and him, and from thence may arise a diversity or contrariety of affections and desires; and these affections and passions may grow to such strength as that he himself shall not be able to master them; and if the parent feel himself subject to such infirmities, well may he be induced to pity those whom a vigorous heat of youth hath rendered more headstrong and unruly: withal let him consider, that though the child should be advised by the parent, yet it is fit that he should like for himself; that the will is to be led, not driven; that no marriage can be happy but that which is grounded in love; that love is so altogether voluntary, that it cannot consist with constraint: lastly, let him know that the power of the father, though great, yet is not unlimited. It is the charge which the Father of mercies hath laid upon all earthly fathers in their carriage towards their children, *Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath*, or as the Vulgar reads[q] it, *to indignation, lest they be discouraged.* And surely if there be any thing wherein the passion of the child may be like to be inordinately stirred, it is in the crossing of an once well settled affection, and diverting the stream of love into another channel: for the avoiding whereof the imperial laws have been so indulgent to the child, as that, according to their best glosses, they permit not the father to disinherit the daughter for choosing an husband not unworthy of herself, though against her father's mind; yea, some of them have gone a step farther: but I forbear. How far it may be lawful and fit for the parent to punish the disrespect of a child, in so important a case, is not for me to determine: doubtless, where the provision is arbitrary, the parent will be apt so to manage it as to make the child sensible of a

[q] Μὴ παροργίζετε, Eph. vi. 4. Μὴ ἐρεθίζετε, Col. iii. 21.

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disobedience; so as both parts herein suffer, and are put into a way of late repentance.

Briefly therefore, on the one side, the son or daughter do justly offend, if, without cause or wilfully, they refuse the parent's choice; and are in duty bound to work their hearts to an obedient subjection to those unto whom they owe themselves: and, for this cause, must be wary in suffering their affections to overrun their own reason and their parents' guidance; either suppressing the first motions of unruly passions, or, if they grow impetuous, venting them betimes into the tender ears of their indulgent parents, or discreet and faithful friends; that so they may seasonably prevent their own misery and their parents' grief.

On the other side, the parent shall offend, if, holding too hard an hand over the fruit of his own body, he shall resolve violently to force the child's affections to his own bent; and where he finds them settled will rather break than bow them, not caring so much to persuade as to compel love. These harshnesses have too much of tyranny in them to be incident to a Christian parent, who must transact all these matrimonial affairs in a smooth and plausible way of consent and indulgence.

A noble and ancient pattern whereof we find in the contract betwixt Isaac and his Rebekah, Gen. xxiv. 49, &c. The match was treated on betwixt Abraham's proxy and the maid's father, Bethuel, and her brother Laban. The circumstances drew their full consent; all is agreed upon betwixt parents. But when all this is done, nothing is done till Rebekah have given her assent: they said, *We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth*, ver. 57. *And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go*, ver. 58. Now the contract is made up: till then, all the engagements of Bethuel and Laban were but compliments; till then, all the rich jewels of gold and silver given to the intended bride, and all the precious things given to her mother and brother, were but at the mercy of the receivers.

Neither ought it to be other in all Christian espousals. The free and cheerful consent of parents and parties makes the match both full and happy. Let not the child dare to cross his parents; let not the parent think to force the child. And when an undue bargain is, through the heat of passion, made up past reclamation, let love and pity so far intercede for the offenders, that they may smart for their rashness and neglect without their utter undoing.

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Case V.—"Whether the marriage of cousins-german, that is, of brother's or sister's children, be lawful?"

The displeasure of the canon law against such marriages is so high flown, that no less can take it off than an utter diremption of them; even though they be not ratified only, but consummate by carnal knowledge. And the grave authority of some ancient and holy fathers and eminent doctors of the church, besides five several councils, have passed an hard sentence upon them.

The main ground of the supposed unlawfulness is that clause of God's law which was more than judicial: *No man shall approach unto any near of kin to his flesh, to uncover their nakedness: I am the Lord;* Lev. xviii. 6. Which though Cornelius à Lapide[r], following his Radulphus, would seem to restrain to the ensuing particularities only, yet they may not think that God will suffer so universal a charge to be so straitly pent; especially when we know there are divers other no less unlawful copulations omitted in this black roll of uncleannesses than those which are expressly mentioned, the rest being intended to come in by way of analogy only: for it is easy for any reader to observe, that all the severalties of the degrees prohibited run still upon the male; under which, if the like exorbitances of the other sex were not meant to be comprehended, females should be lawless, and the law imperfect.

To marry, then, with a cousin-german is apprehended by these canonists to be an approach to *one near kin to our flesh*, and therefore intimated in that inhibition.

Doctor Willet, a man much deserving of God's Church, conceives these marriages to be analogically forbidden in this catalogue of Moses. "For," saith he[s], "if the degrees of affinity be limited to the third or fourth degree; as it is not lawful for a man to marry his wife's daughter's daughter, Lev. xviii. 17; why should not the line of consanguinity hold to the fourth degree likewise; and so neither the son to marry his father's brother's daughter, or the daughter the son?" But that worthy divine did not heedfully observe the great difference betwixt these instanced degrees: for the one of these is in an equal line, the other in an unequal line; the one is a collateral consanguinity, the other is in a directly descending affinity; so as the husband should be grand-

[r] Cor. à Lap. in locum.

[s] Will. Syno. Controver. 15. of Matr. q. 3. [Synops. Papismi. p. 795. Lond. 1634.]

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father-in-law to the wife, which in all reason were very unlawful and absurd; since in all those descending degrees there is a kind of reverential inequality betwixt the lower and superior, which abhors from all proportion of a match; whereas the collateral equidistance of cousins-german from the stock whence both descend, hath in it no such appearance of inequality. Certainly, then, no analogy can draw these marriages within the prohibition; whether the nearness of approach to our flesh be a just bar to them must be farther considered.

Gregory, whom some would fain interest in our English apostleship, writing to his Augustin[t] in way of answer to his interrogations, puts these marriages in the same rank with the marriages of brothers and sisters; which he brands with this note, that they seldom ever prove fruitful.

As for those of brothers and sisters, which were usual, as Diodorus Siculus tells us, amongst the Egyptians, and are this day in use in barbarous nations, nature itself abominates the mention of them. In the first plantation of the world there was a necessity of them, as without which there could have been no human generation; but afterwards, as the earth grew more peopled, so these matches grew still more odious. Like as it was also in the first plantation of the Church; the holy seed being confined to a narrow compass, were forced, unless they would join with infidels, to match sometimes overnear to themselves; as even Abraham himself, the father of the faithful, married his brother's daughter. But when the bounds of men and believers came to be enlarged, the greater elbowroom opened a wider liberty of choice; and now God's select people found it meet to observe a due distance in the elections of their wives, so regarding the entireness of their tribes as that they fell not within the lines of prohibition: wherein no mention being made of brother's and sister's children, in all ages and nations some have thought fit to make use of their freedom in this kind.

What need I to urge the case of Zelophehad's five daughters, Num. xxxvi. 11; who, by God's own approbation, were married to their father's brother's sons? To mince the matter, and to make these sons nephews, according to the Hebrew phrase, as doctor Willet endeavours to do, is without either need or warrant; since these scruples were not since that time stood upon by the Jewish people.

[t] Greg. Resp. ad Interrog. Augustini. q. 6. [Op. Romæ, 1591. tom. iv. p. 436.]

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Yea, this practice was no less current among the civiler heathens of old. I could tell you of Cluentia, by Cicero's relation[u], married to her cousin[x] Marcus Aurius; of Marcus Antoninus, the wise and virtuous philosopher, marrying his cousin Faustina, and a world of others; were not this labour saved me by the learned lawyer Hotoman; who tells us how universal this liberty was of old, as being enacted by the laws of the Roman empire, and descending to the laws of Justinian; and confidently affirms, that for five hundred years all Christian people, *magno consensu*, allowed and followed these imperial constitutions concerning matrimony[y]. Although I might here put him in mind of Theodosius enacting the contrary in his time, as, it is like, by S. Ambrose's instigation; who then sharply inveighed against these matches in a vehement epistle to Paternus[z], being then in hand with a marriage betwixt his son and his sister's daughter.

But excepting that good emperor, the coast was clear perhaps for the Cæsarean constitutions: not so for the judgment of divines; amongst whom it were enough that S. Ambrose and S. Augustin, the flower of the Latin fathers, if no other, do bitterly oppose it.

This judgment being found not probable only, but exceeding profitable to the Roman see, it is no wonder if it obtained both credit and vigour from thence. Decrees and decretals make this inhibition good, not without damning the contrary practice; and now the civil and canon laws clashing with one another, how can it be but the prevalence must be according to the power of the abettor?

What liberty the court of Rome[a] hath taken to itself in the restraint of marriages, and upon what ground, all Christendom both sees and feels. One while their prohibition reaches to the seventh degree in natural kindred; then to the fourth. One while the impediment of spiritual cognation is stretched so far, without any colour of divine authority, as that, what by baptism, what by confirmation, twenty several persons are excluded from the capacity of intermarriage; another while the market is fallen to fourteen. And wherefore this, but for the sweet and scarce

[u] Cicer. Orat. pro Cluentio.

[x] [Not Marcus, but A. Aurius Melinus, see Oxf. ed. §. 5., Or. pro Cluentio.]

[y] Hotoman de Grad. Cognat.—Laurent. Kirchovius Profes. Rostoch. in Consil. Matrimon.

[z] Ambr. Ep. ad Paternum. 66. [Paris, 1586. t. iv. p. 1098.]

[a] *Hodie cessat fraternitas, et aliqua ex parte compaternitas, per Concilium Trident.* Sess. 24. Navarr. c. 22. n. 27.

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valuable gain of dispensations upon these occasions flowing into the Lateran treasure? For which considerations we have learned not to attribute too much to the judgment or practice of the Roman courtiers in this point.

Upon the summing up then of this discourse, will you be pleased to see the vast latitude of different opinions concerning these marriages? The canon law decries them with such rigour, as to ordain them, though after a conjugal conversation, separated. Some moderate divines, as doctor Willet, finding this sentence too hard, go not so far; but hold this nearness of blood a sufficient bar to hinder a marriage contracted, though not consummate; some others, as Mr. Perkins in my conference with him, hold it, though not unlawful, yet inconvenient: some others, as learned and acute Mr. Wooton, and Mr. Attersoll, who hath written a very large discourse in way of vindication of them, hold them both lawful and not inexpedient: Hotoman, yet higher, *pium et Christianum esse, quod duarum sororum liberi matrimonio copulentur;* that such a marriage is pious and Christian[b].

In all this variety, if you desire my opinion, I shall neither censure such marriages where they are made, nor yet encourage them to be made where they are not. To those that are free, I should be apt to suggest counsels of forbearance: the world is wide, the choice abundant: let it be never so lawful, yet how unwise and unsafe were it to put the conscience upon the nicety of a dangerous scruple, when it may keep aloof off with a clear freedom and resolute contentment! That these marriages are disallowed by so great authority, should be reason enough to divert the free thoughts to a safer election; and again, that these marriages are allowed both by civil laws and by the judgment of eminent divines, and not any where forbidden, either *jure Cæsareo* or *Apostolico*, by God's law or Cæsar's, should be reason enough to bear up the hearts of those who are so matched from a scrupulous dejection. Let the persons therefore so married enjoy themselves with mutual complacency and comfort, not disquieting themselves with needless anxieties. Let those single persons who have the world before them look farther off, and fasten their affections at a more unquestionable distance. As it was wont to be worthy Mr. Perkins's expression to this purpose; "Let those who must walk close to the brim of a steep precipice look well to their feet, and tread sure; and so they may come off perhaps as safely as

[b] Hotoman de Vita Matrim. p. 6. citante Kirchovio; ut supra.

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those that are farther off; but if a man be to choose his way, let him so cast it as that he may not approach near to the brink of danger."

CASE VI.—"Whether is it necessary or requisite there should be a witnessed contract or espousals of the parties to be married, before the solemnization of the marriage?"

It is necessary we should distinguish betwixt those things which are essential to the very being of marriage and those which are requisite to the orderly and well-being of it.

It may not be denied that the marriage is true and valid, which, with full consent of parties, is made without the intervention of a previous contract, in a due and lawful form prescribed by the Church; but it is no less true, that such a marriage is very unmeet, and liable to just exceptions.

That God, who is the Author and Institutor of marriage, made a difference in his law betwixt a betrothing and a matrimony[c]: he that ordained the one ordained the other also, and ordained the one in order to the other.

And this was constantly observed in the practice of God's ancient people accordingly. So we find the blessed Virgin espoused to Joseph before his taking her to wife[d]: neither did the Christian Church think fit to vary from so holy a pattern[e]; whereto S. Paul alludes, when, writing to and of the Church of Corinth, which he had happily planted and forwarded in grace, he saith, *I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ*, 2 Cor. xi. 2. Lo, he hath betrothed them to Christ, in that he had entered them into a covenant of grace, and prepared their souls for a full consummation of their blessed union with Christ in glory; intimating, as matrimony is a lively resemblance of our spiritual conjunction with the Lord of glory, that our bodily espousals here below are they which must make way for a complete marriage ensuing.

It were not difficult, if it were needful, to deduce this holy practice down from the primitive times to the present. Before the Nicene council, we find the synod of Ancyra enjoining a severe penance to the man that should defile his body by an incestuous copulation after espousals contracted[f]. And the council

[c] Exod. xxii. 16; Lev. xix. 20; Deut. xx. 7; xxii. 25, 23, 28.; Jer. ii. 2.
[d] Compare Matt. i. 18. with Deut. xxii. 13.
[e] Magdeburg. Cent. 2. de Conjugio. [f] Concil. Ancyran. Can. 24. [Bin. t. i. p. 275.]

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of Eliberis or Granada, about the time of the Nicene convention, takes such notice of these betrothings, as that it decreed, that if any parents should break the faith mutually engaged in these espousals, they should be held off during the space of three years from the communion[g]. What should I trouble you with the decree of Siricius concerning these contracts[h], or with the pregnant testimonies of S. Chrysostom and Ambrose to this purpose, which were but to waste time and paper upon so clear a truth?

As there was no Christian Church which did not carefully observe this sacred rite, so, above all other, the Roman hath been at least curious enough, in calling for a strict and severe account of their espousals. What voluminous discourses, what a world of nice questions, have fallen from the pens of their canonists and casuists concerning this subject! Certainly, this is a point of so much use and agitation amongst them, that were it not for the quarrels arising herefrom, it is to be feared their consistories would want work, and their advocates employment.

But, to speak ingenuously, those of the Roman clientele are not more careful and punctual in scanning and observing the rules and practice of their espousals, than ours here are incurious of both. How many have we heard to say, they will make no promise of themselves till they come to the church door! And of those that do contract themselves, how weakly and insufficiently is it performed on many hands; so as their act, if questioned, is no way obliging, nor such as, upon the least discontent, will endure a contestation.

Now whereas there is a double contract or espousal, the one of the future, the other of the present:—

That of the present, if it be expressed in full terms, differs nothing from marriage itself, save only in the public solemnization; which doubtless is a ceremony so requisite, as that without it an horrible confusion must needs follow both in Church and state:

That of the future is a mutual engagement of both parties that they will marry eath other, which is most properly an espousal contract; giving both assurance to each other of a mutual consent to a matrimony that shall be, and yet withal some meet respiration of a more full trial and inquiry into each other's condition. For which purpose the wisdom of the Church hath ordained, that

[g] Concil. Elib. c. 54. [Bin. tom. i. p. 242.]
[h] Luitbrand in Siric.

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there should be a solemn publication of that more private contract, three several sabbaths, to the whole congregation; not without the earnest charge of a discovery of whatsoever impediment might justly hinder the intended matrimony.

The frequent but unfit use of these espousal contracts in the Roman Church betwixt their children in minority, allowing seven years in either party for a meet age to this purpose[1], must needs breed both much question and inconvenience.

But in those which are of a mature age, and therefore able to judge of what may be most expedient for themselves, this institution cannot be but singularly useful and beneficial: for neither is it meet that so great a work, and so highly importing us as matrimony, should be rashly and suddenly undertaken; neither doth it a little conduce to our safety, that, since marriage once passed is irreversible, we may have some breathing time betwixt our promise and accomplishment, to inform ourselves throughly, before it be too late, what we must trust to for ever.

For we may take notice, that though marriage is indissoluble, yet these espousals or contracts of a future marriage are not so: many things may intervene betwixt this engagement by promise and that full and complete solemnization, which may break off the match.

The casuists determine of seventeen several cases at the least, which may sort to this effect: some whereof have a proper relation to the Romish religion; others are common to whatever contracts of this kind. I shall not grudge you the mention of them all.

An espousal-contract therefore may, according to their judgment, be broken off,

By the willing remission of both parties, although it had been seconded by an oath:

By the entrance of the one party into some order of religion:

By a contract with some other, in words of the present:

By the travel of one of the parties into remote countries, and not returning upon a lawful summons at the time prefixed by the judge:

By an affinity supervening, upon the sinful copulation of one of the parties with the near kinswoman of the other:

[1] *Ætas legitime contrahendi matrimonium, est, in masculis, 14 annos; in fœminis, 12: sponsalibus autem contrahendis, septem in utrisque.* Navar. c. 22. n. 28.

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By the absolution of the judge, upon suit of one of the parties repenting and pleading minority:

By lapse of the time set for the accomplishment of the marriage:

By the disease of one of the parties; being fallen into palsy, leprosy, the Neapolitan sickness, or any other contagious distemper or notable deformity:

By the fornication of one of the parties committed since the contract:

By a vow of a chastity preceding the contract:

By some capital enmity intervening betwixt the families and persons of the contracted:

By the omission of performing the promised conditions; as when the dowry agreed upon is retracted or held off:

By the fame of a canonical impediment:

By susception of orders after contract:

By the supervention of a legal kindred unexpected:

By the harshness and asperity of disposition in either party:

And, which may comprise many other particularities, by the falling out and discovery of any such accident or event as, if it had been sooner known, would have prevented the making of such a contract.

All these, say they, may bar a marriage after espousals; but yet so as that the parties may not be their own arbiters, to break off their contracts at pleasure, but must have recourse to the judge ecclesiastical, and submit themselves to the overruling sentence of the church.

If you balk those which are proper to the Romish superstition, yet you shall find many just and allowable causes which may, after a contract of espousal, interrupt a purposed matrimony: so as, if there were neither rule nor example of any such preceding engagement, yet surely it were very fit, for our own security, and our confident and comfortable entrance into that estate which we shall never put off, to observe carefully this previous betrothing of ourselves, ere we knit the knot that can never be loosed.

CASE VII.—"Whether there ought to be a prohibition and forbearance of marriages and marriage duties, for some times appointed?"

It is one thing what is lawful, another thing what is fit and

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expedient; as S. Paul hath taught us to distinguish. Marriage being of God's own institution, and that in the perfection of paradise, there can be no time wherein it may be unlawful to celebrate it; yet there may be times wherein it is unfit.

There is the like reason of times and places: both of them are circumstances alike.

The debt of the marriage bed not only may, but must be paid by them whom God hath called to that estate; yet there are places wherein it were barbarous and piacular to defray it. Even besides those places which are destined to an holy use, the Jews of old held this act done in the field, or under a tree, worthy of scourging [k].

Doubtless there are times so wholly consecrated to devotion as that therein it would be utterly unseasonable to let our thoughts loose to the most lawful pleasures. Hence is that charge of the apostle, *Defraud not one the other, except it be with consent for the time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer*, 1 Cor. vii. 5. So then, as Solomon himself can say, *There is a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing*, Eccles. iii. 5.

But what the limitation of this time may be, no small question hath been raised in the Church of God. Neither do there want extremities on both sides.

The Church of Rome hath heretofore been excessively large in her prohibitions; forbidding the solemnization of marriage, upon pretence of the holiness of the great feasts to be observed, for the whole third part of the year: neither doth the account fall less, if we reckon from the Advent to the Epiphany, from Septuagesima Sunday to the octaves of Easter, and from three days before the Ascension to the octaves of Pentecost: all which had wont to be strictly kept; besides the feast of S. John Baptist, added by some, and the four ember weeks, by others. But now of late, upon second thoughts, their council of Trent [l] have found it meet to shorten the restraint, and somewhat to enlarge the liberty of the seasons for marriage; having exempted the two only solemn feasts of Easter and the Nativity, and abridged some previous weeks of the former. And for us, how observant the consistories had wont to be of those inhibitions, for their own gain, every almanack can witness. Some worthy divines in our Church

[k] Maimon. Shicard. de Reg.

[l] Concil. Trid. Sess. 24. [c. x. Bin. tom. iv. p. 854.]

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did not stick to profess their great dislike of our conforming herein to the Church of Rome, to the scandal of the reformed. Concerning both which I must say, that if either we or they do put any holiness in the time exempted, or any unholiness in the act inhibited, we cannot be excused from superstition. Can any time be more holy than God's own day? yet on that day we do commonly both publish marriages and celebrate them. But if, as in solemn fasts indicted by the Church for some public humiliation, we both do and enjoin to abstain from all conjugal society, so in a desire the more devoutly to celebrate the memory of God's infinite mercy to mankind in sending a Saviour into the world for our redemption, and of the glorious resurrection of that Son of God for our justification, we shall take off ourselves from all worldly cares or delights, I see not why it should not be both lawful and commendable.

But to say as it is, as the Romanists are guilty of too much scruple in this kind, so too many of our own are no less faulty in a careless disregard of the holiest occasions of restraint; which I would to God it did not too palpably appear in the scandalous carnality of many otherwise, inoffensive professors.

It is a common practice, which I have long wished an opportunity to censure, that husbands and wives forget one another too soon. Scarce are their consorts fully cold, ere they are laying for a second match; and too few months are enow for the consummation of it. Let me be bold to say, this haste hath in it too much, not immodesty only, but inhumanity.

If we look abroad into the world, we shall find, not among God's peculiar people only, but even amongst the very heathens, a meet, and not niggardly, intermission, betwixt the decease of the one husband or wife and the marriage of another. A whole year was found little enough for the wife to mourn for her husband departed; and so is still amongst the very Chinese, though atheous pagans. And by the civil laws, a woman marrying within a year after her husband's death is counted infamous [m].

It was no short time [n] that Abraham, though now very old, breathed upon Sarah, the first of wives mentioned as mourned for, before he took Keturah; and yet the Hebrew doctors ob-

[m] Alex. ab Alex. l. iii. Gen. Dier. c. 7. [L. iv. c. 7. "Nisi post decimum mensem." Paris, 1539. p. 90.] Cod. l. ii. tit. 12.

[n] As appears by comparing of Gen. xxiii. 2. with xxv. 1.

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serve, that there is a short letter ° in the midst of that word which signifies his mourning, to imply, say they, that his mourning was but moderate. I am sure his son Isaac (Gen. xxiv. 67) was not comforted concerning the death of that his good mother till three years after her decease: at which time he brought his Rebekah into that tent, which even still retained the name of Sarah's. Whereas with us, after the profession of the greatest dearness, the old posy of the death's ring tells what we may trust to: "Dead and forgotten." Who can but blush to read that some heathens were fain to make laws, that the wife might not be allowed to continue her solemn mourning for her husband above ten months, and to see that our women had need of a law to enforce them so to mourn for the space of one?

In other reformed Churches there is a determinate time of months set, until the expiration whereof widows, especially the younger, are not suffered to marry. It were more than requisite, that these loose times were here with us curbed with so seasonable a constitution: but it were yet more happy, if a due regard of public honesty and Christian modesty could set bounds to our inordinate desires; and so moderate our affections, that the world may see we are led by a better guide than appetite.

Case VIII.—"Whether it be necessary that marriages should be celebrated by a minister; and whether they may be valid and lawful without him?"

It is no marvel if the Church of Rome, which holds matrimony a sacrament, conferring grace by the very work wrought, require an absolute necessity of the priest's hand in so holy an act: but for us who, though reverently esteeming that sacred institution, yet set it in a key lower, it admits of too much question whether we need to stand upon the terms of a minister's agency in the performance of that solemn action.

There are those in these wild times that have held it sufficiently lawful for the parties, having agreed upon the bargain before friends and witnesses, to betake themselves to bed: others have thought this act of conjoining the married persons in wedlock a fitter act for the magistrate to undertake.

And certainly, if there were nothing in marriage but mere nature, it could not be amiss that men and women should, upon their mutual agreement, couple themselves together after the

° לְבֻכָּתָהּ Gen. xxiii. 2.

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manner of brute creatures; and if there were nothing in marriage but mere civility, the magistrate might be meet to be employed in this service. But now that we Christians know matrimony to be an holy institution of God himself, which he not only ordained, but actually celebrated betwixt the first innocent pair; and which, being for the propagation of an holy seed, requires a special benediction; how can we in reason think any man meet for this office but the man of God set over us in the Lord, to derive the blessings of Heaven upon our heads?

From hence, therefore, have our wholesome laws taken a just hint to appropriate this service to a lawful minister only: so as whatever private contract may be transacted in corners betwixt the parties affected to each other, yet the marriage knot cannot be publicly knit by any other hand than God's ministers.

And herein, certainly, we have just cause to bless the wisdom both of the Church and State; which hath so regulated these matrimonial affairs, as that they are not only orderly, but safely managed; for, doubtless, were not this provision carefully made, the world would be quite overrun with beastliness and horrible confusion.

And in this point we may well give the Church of Rome her due, and acknowledge the wise care of her Lateran and Tridentine councils, which have enacted so strict decrees against clandestine marriages, and have taken so severe a course for the reforming of many foul disorders in these matrimonial proceedings, as may be of good use for the Christian world. Had they done the like in other cases, their light had not gone out in a snuff.

As, therefore, it is generally both decreed and observed, not without excellent reason, in all Christian Churches, that marriages should be solemnized in the public congregation of God's people, so it cannot but be requisite that it should be done by him who is ordained to be the mouth of the congregation to God, and the mouth of God to the congregation. And as under the Law the priest was the man who must convey blessings from God to his people, so under the Gospel, who can be so apt for this divine office as he that serves at the evangelical altar? And if all our marriages must be, according to the apostle's charge, made *in the Lord*, who is so meet to pronounce God's ratification of our marriages as he who is the professed herald of the Almighty?

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As it is therefore requisite, even according to the Roman constitutions, that he who is betrusted with the cure of our souls should, besides other witnesses, be both present and active in and at our domestic contracts of matrimony; so, by the laws both of our Church and kingdom, it is necessary he should have his hand in the public celebration of them.

There may then be firm contracts, there cannot be lawful marriages, without God's ministers.

Case IX.—"Whether there be any necessity or use of thrice publishing the contract of marriage in the congregation before the celebration of it; and whether it be fit that any dispensation should be granted for the forbearance of it?"

There were amongst the Jews certain ceremonial observations, besides the precepts, which they called the hedge of the law; and such there cannot want amongst Christians, whose prudence must direct them both to the ordaining and keeping of some such expedient rules as may best preserve God's laws from violation.

Of that kind is this which we now have in hand.

This public and reiterated denunciation of banns before matrimony is an institution required and kept, both by all the churches of the Roman correspondence[p], and by all the reformed.

Amongst which, as ours is most eminent, so it hath still expressed the most zeal and care of the due observing of so wholesome a rite. Six several canons[q] were made in our provincial synod, under the authority of king James of blessed memory, in the year 1603, to this purpose; with as strict charges, restrictions, and cautions, as the wit of man could in this case devise. And the late Directory hath found cause to second so useful and laudable a constitution.

For the convenience, if not necessity whereof, we need no other argument than the grievous mischiefs that have followed upon the neglect of this ordinance. That one were enough, which is instanced by the Tridentine synod itself[r]; that some lewd persons having secretly married themselves to one, take liberty to leave that match and publicly join themselves to another, with whom they live wickedly in a perpetual adultery; the frequent practice whereof in those hotter climates we may easily believe,

[p] Concil. Trident. Sess. 24. Decret. de Reformat. Matrimon. [c. 1. Bin. tom. iv. p. 853.]

[q] Constit. [sive Canon. Eccl.] 62, 63, 101, 102, 103, 104.

[r] Concil. Trid. ubi supra.

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when we see that in our own more temperate region the fear of hanging cannot hold some off from so foul a sin.

Let me add hereunto the late experiments of some odiously incestuous marriages, which, even by the relation of our diurnalists, have by this means found a damnable passage, to the great dishonour of God and shame of the Church. And hereupon the sad issue of stolen marriages, wherein parents have been most feloniously robbed of their children, are too feelingly known and irrecoverably lamented. But as for unfitness and inequality of matches, both for age and condition, to the too late repentance and utter undoing of both parties, they are so ordinary, that they are every day's occurrences.

And all these evils have sensibly grown from the want of these public denunciations of banns; partly upon the unhappy throwing open of the fence of discipline, and partly upon the surreption of secretly misgotten dispensations.

And though that forementioned synod of ours, seconded by royal authority, took the most probable course that could be conceived[s], the liberty of those faculties being continued for the preventing of these abuses; as the restraint of the grant of them by any other, save those who have episcopal authority; and security to be given upon good bonds, that the coast is clear from all precontracts, suits of law, and prohibited degrees; that the full consent of parents or guardians is had; that the marriage shall be celebrated in the parish church where one of the parties dwelleth; and, lastly, the oaths required of two sufficient witnesses, one whereof known to the judge, that the express consent of parents or guardians goes along with the match intended, and that there is no impediment from any precontract, kindred or alliance: yet notwithstanding all this prudent caution, we have, by woful experience, found our offices cheated, faculties corruptly procured, and matches illegally struck up, contrary to the pretended conditions; whereas all this mischief might have been avoided, if, as no marriage may be allowed but public, so those public marriages might not be celebrated but after thrice publication of the contract in both the parish churches where the persons contracted are known to inhabit: for so both the parents of either side cannot but be acquainted with the engagements of their children; and if there be any just hinderance, either by precontract or by proximity of blood

[s] Constit. and Canons, ut supra. Can. 101, 102, 103.

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or affinity, it cannot be concealed; that so the snare of either an unlawful or prejudicial matrimony may be seasonably eschewed.

To this good purpose therefore it is no less than necessary, as I humbly conceive, to be both enacted and observed, that no marriage should be allowed of any person whatsoever, except perhaps the peers of the realm, who are supposed to be famously known through the kingdom, without a solemn publication of their contracts at three several meetings to the congregation assembled, and that there may no dispensation at all be granted to the contrary, upon any whatsoever conditions. And if some pretend bashfulness, others fear of malicious prevention, as the Tridentine doctors suggest; yet it is fit that both should vail to the inevitable danger of those mischievous inconveniences which follow upon these clandestine matches and silent dispensations.

Case X.—"Whether marriages, once made, may be annulled and utterly voided; and in what cases this may be done?"

In what only case a divorce may be made, after a lawful marriage, you have seen before: now you inquire of the annulling or voiding of marriages made unlawfully; which doubtless may be done by just authority, upon divers well grounded occasions; for as it is an indispensable charge, *Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder;* so it no less truly holds on the contrary, "Those whom God hath forbidden to be joined, let no man keep together."

Our casuists are wont to be very copious in this subject: distinguishing betwixt those impediments which may hinder a marriage from being made, and those which may undo and void the marriage once made.

They insist upon many particularities of both kinds, and some perhaps, too many.

I shall instance only in those of the latter sort, which are unquestionable.

Whereof the first shall be, a misprision of the match; when one party is mistaken for another; as when he who, by a full contract, consented to marry with Anne, is, by a fraudulent substitution, put upon a marriage with Mary; whether upon the likeness of the woman, or the want of a discerning sense in the man, or by some cunning conveyance of the perfidious contrivers; for certainly it is the consent that makes the marriage; and if the hearts be not joined together by mutual agreement and affection, the coupling

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of the hands is but a ceremony utterly ineffectual. I doubt not but it was in Jacob's power to have disavowed the match with Leah, whom his father-in-law had deceitfully obtruded upon him; being more injurious in changing his wife, than in ten times changing his wages; since his heart was not accessary to that match, which the darkness of the night and subtlety of Laban had drawn him into. The like case is in the marrying of a bondwoman instead of a free, a base plebeian instead of a person of honour. As then we use to say, that misreckoning is no payment, so we may well affirm, that a mismarriage is no true wedlock, and therefore justly to be branded with a nullity.

A second may be, the fœdity and unnaturalness of the match; when the parties incestuously marry within the first collateral degree of brothers and sisters; the very mention whereof, even nature itself, not depraved, abhors: so as I cannot but wonder that the Roman school should be so much divided in this point, while Bonaventure[t], Richardus, and Durand hold such a marriage, even by divine law, a nullity; contrarily, Aquinas, Cajetan, Thomas de Argentina, and others, whom Covarruvias recites, defend this to be only an impediment by the canon law, and therefore that it may be in the pope's power to dispense with so foul a matrimony; against whom, upon better reason, Scotus[u] and Dominicus à Soto[x] prove such marriages, by the law of nature, to be utterly void and null; with whom all ingenuous Christians cannot but willingly concur in their judgments.

A third may be, the horribleness of a crime committed in the way to a wicked match; and that of two sorts; the one of murder, the other of adultery; the former, when the wife hath conspired with the adulterer to murder her husband with an intent to marry the murderer, or in the like case the husband to murder the wife; the latter, when a man, living in a known adultery with another man's wife, contracts matrimony with the adulteress in the lifetime of her husband.

A fourth is, the indissoluble knot of marriage with a former still surviving husband or wife; the force whereof is such, as that it frustrates and voideth any supervening matrimony, except in the case specified in the foregoing discourse of divorce, during the

[t] Martin. Alphons. Vivald. Candelab. Aureum de Matrim. et partic. de Consanguin.

[u] Scot. m. 4. d. 40. [Quæst. lib. iv. dist. 40.]

[x] Sot. [De Just. et Jure, l. vii. q. 5. art. 3.]

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natural life of the consorts. Many unhappy and perplexed cases have we met withal in this kind; neither doth it seldom fall out, that the husband, being confidently reported for dead in the wars or in travel abroad, the wife, after some years' stay and diligent inquisition, finding the rumour strongly verified by credible testimonies and tendered oaths, begins to listen to some earnest suitor, and bestows herself in a second marriage; not long after which, her only true revived husband returns, and challengeth his right in that his lawful wife; pretending the miscarriage of letters and messages sent by him in that forced absence. In this case, what is to be done? The woman hath cast herself upon the danger of a capital law, except she have expected the time limited by statute; or if she escape, one of the husbands is to seek for a wife, whom both may not enjoy. Doubtless the second marriage is, by ecclesiastical authority, to be pronounced, as it is, null; which indeed never had any true right to be; and the first must be content to swallow its own inconveniences.

A fifth may be, a violent enforcement of the match; when a woman is, upon fear of pain or death, compelled to yield herself in marriage, and is not persuaded, but affrighted into the bonds of wedlock; surely this is rather a rape than a matrimony; and therefore, upon utter want of consent, a nullity.

A sixth may be, a preceding irremediable impotency or incapacity of marriage duties; whether natural or adventitious; whether by way of perpetual maleficiation or casualty. I say, preceding: for if any such disability be subsequent to the marriage, the nullity is avoided; but if the persons find in themselves beforehand such remediless incapability of a marriage estate, they shall be highly injurious to each other, and shall foully abuse the ordinance of God, in their entering into such a condition; for it is apparent, that the main ends of marriage are herein utterly frustrate; which were, by God's appointment, the propagation of mankind, and the remedy of incontinency; neither of which being attainable in such a defective estate of body, justly is such a match pronounced a nullity.

But here I cannot but take occasion to commend the modesty of the women of our nation; amongst whom there are so rare examples of suits in this kind prosecuted in our ecclesiastical consistories. It is not to be doubted but there are many defects of this nature to be found everywhere; yet scarce one in an age offers to complain and call for redress; so as it seems they are

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willing to smother all secret deficiencies in a bashful silence: whereas those of other warmer regions, impatient of the wrongs of their conjugal disappointments, fly out into open contestations, and fearlessly seek for those remedies which the laws, provided in such cases, will allow them. Certainly the merit of this modest temper is so much the greater, by how much more it is concealed from the world; and those of either sex, that are content to bite in their hidden grievances of this kind, are worthy of double honour from those consorts, whose injurious infirmities they both have not disclosed, and suffer in suppressing.

ADDITIONALS.

Certain cases of doubt, besides the formerly published, having been proposed to me, and received a private solution; I have thought fit, upon the address of a second edition, to adjoin them to their fellows, for the satisfaction of any others whom the same cases may concern.

CASE I.—"Whether a marriage consummate betwixt the uncle and niece be so utterly unlawful as to merit a sentence of present separation?"

RESOLUTION.

WHAT prodigious matches have been of late made, and are still continued, upon advantage taken of the unsettledness of the times, I would rather silently lament, than openly proclaim to the world.

Such as are not capable of any apology call for our blushing and tears.

But there are some others which dare stand upon the terms of defence: such is this which you have here propounded in the behalf of your friend, whom it seems a mislearned advocate would fain bear up in a course altogether unjustifiable. That cause must needs be desperately ill that can find no mercenary abettors. His offensive marriage with his niece is heartened by a sophistical

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pleader, whose wit and skill is so ill bestowed in this case, that I wish his fee might be perpetual silence; but when he hath made use of his best art to so bad a purpose, those colours of defence, wherewith he thinks to daub over so foul a cause, will prove but water colours, which shall easily be washed off by this present confutation.

"It was lawful," he saith, "before the Levitical law, thus to match:"—so were worse marriages than this. Let him tell me that Cain, and Enoch, and Seth married their own sisters; as Saturn also did, by the report of Diodorus Siculus. Necessity made it then not unlawful. It is a just rule of law: "Those things may not be drawn into precedent which have been yielded upon mere necessity[y];" as we use to say, "Necessity hath no law," so it can make none. Afterwards, as mankind grew, nature itself taught men to keep farther aloof from their own flesh; and still remoteness of distance enlarged itself with time.

"Abraham," saith he, "married his niece Sarai, Gen. xi. 29, (if at least Sarai were Iscah); Nahor, his niece Milcah; Amram, his aunt Jochebed: and these, not without a large blessing upon the bed:"—Let him tell me also, that Jacob married two sisters, and conversed conjugally with both, which were now shamefully incestuous; yet was herein blessed with the issue of six of those patriarchs, who were the root of those glorious stems of Israel. If we should speak most favourably of these conjunctions, to rank them under *malum quia prohibitum;* it must needs follow, that, till the prohibition came, they could not be censured as evil: though good authors make it justly questionable, whether these forealleged marriages should deservedly be charged with a sin or excused by God's extraordinary dispensation. In the mean time, the blessing was to the person, not to the act. Even Lot's incestuous copulation with his daughters sped well: two famous nations sprang thence; and of one of them, the gracious progenitrix of the Saviour of the world: yet this is no plea for the allowance of that monstrous conjunction. After the law, one justifiable example were worth a thousand before it.

"Lo, good Caleb," saith he, "married his daughter Achsah to his brother Othniel, Joshua. xv. 16, 17:"—Indeed, this case comes as home to the business as it is far off from the text. See whither misprision of Scripture may mislead us. A man that

[y] *In argumentum trahi nequeunt, quæ propter necessitatem sunt concessa.*

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understands nothing but the English, or Vulgar Latin, may easily run into so foul an error. Weigh but the place well and you will soon find the fault, without me. Othniel, the son of Kenaz, Caleb's brother, took Kerath-Sepher; and Caleb gave him Achsah, his daughter, to wife. The English, wanting cases, expresses it doubtfully. It will be clear in the Latin; as Montanus and Pagnine, two great masters of the Hebrew, in their interlinear, read it: *Othniel, filius Kenaz, fratris Calebi;* "Othniel, the son of Kenaz, which Kenaz was Caleb's brother." Both the Hebrew and Chaldee clear that sense. So the Septuagint, as Emanuel Sa also urges upon that place, Judges i. 13, expressly say, that Kenaz was the brother of Caleb, and not Othniel. Wherein yet I cannot much blame an unbalanced judgment, while I find the Septuagint contrary to themselves: for in Joshua xv. 16. they say, Othniel was Caleb's younger brother; in Judges iii. 9. they say, Kenaz, the father of Othniel, was so; for which there is no excuse but the large sense of a brother in the Hebrew. *We are brethren,* saith Abraham to Lot; yet he was Lot's uncle: so was Kenaz a progenitor to Othniel; for Caleb is styled the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, Joshua xiv. 14. and Num. xxxii. 12. The case was only this, Kenaz was the ancestor of Caleb; and one of the same name was his brother, the father of Othniel. What can be more plain, than 1 Chron. iv. 13: *And the sons of Kenaz, Othniel and Seraiah.* So as, if we take this most strictly to the letter, it implies nothing but the marriage of two cousins-german; Othniel the son of Kenaz, and Achsah the daughter of Caleb, brother's children, as Bucer upon the place, Melancthon in his tract *De Conjugio,* Junius; and, indeed, who otherwise? And now, by this time, you see what a poor ground this is to build upon: rather, you see a castle, not built on the sand, but in the air; mere misconceit.

"But," saith the advocate, "this marriage is no where directly forbidden in the law:"—I must tell him it is but a mere shuffle, to stand upon the terms of a direct prohibition, when there is one no less forcible and convictive. Two ways may aught be effectually forbidden in the law; either in plain expression of terms, or in clear implication of sense: surely, that is rather more in the Law, which it means irrefragably, than what it verbally expresseth.

Now, however this be not in the letter of the law, yet in the

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sense it is: the same law that forbids the nephew to marry the aunt, doth, *eadem opera*, forbid the uncle to marry the niece. In regard as of nearness, yea identity of blood, the case is the same; however some inequality may be conceived in respect of government and subjection. And if upon some economical terms it be more unfit for a nephew to marry his aunt than for an uncle to marry his niece; yet in regard of blood, and that bodily conjunction which God principally aims at in this prohibition, what difference can possibly be conceived? Nature hath made no other distance betwixt the nephew and the aunt than betwixt the niece and the uncle; or if there be any, they must be sharper eyes than mine that can discern it.

God himself, methinks, hath put this out of doubt: the reason wherewith he backs his command is irresistible; the nephew shall not marry the father's sister; why so? *For she is thy father's near kinswoman*, Lev. xviii. 12. Lo, it is the nearness of blood that makes this match unlawful; not respect of civil inequality. Where the blood, then, is equally near, the marriage must be equally unlawful.

That rule of law which is pretended, *In prohibitoriis, quicquid non prohibetur, permittitur;* "What is not forbidden is permitted;" had need of a fair construction. Indeed, that which is not forbidden, either in words or in necessary analogy and implication of sense, is supposed to be left at large. But what place hath this axiom in a case not less really forbidden, than the expressed? And if we should strictly follow the letter of this maxim, it would lead us into Sodom: since there are marriages not specified which would be monstrously incestuous, and such as honesty would blush to mention; as shall appear in the sequel.

Neither is there any more force in that other, *In pœnalibus, non fit extensio;* "That penal laws should not be stretched farther than their words import." Certainly, in some sense, I know no law that is not penal; but why this law, *Thou shalt not marry thy aunt or niece*, should be rather penal, than, *Thou shalt not commit adultery*, I know not. I am sure learned Zanchius accounts these of the eighteenth of Leviticus equally moral: and Bucanus holds them to be against the law of nature. And if in human laws this axiom may challenge a place, yet in the royal laws of our Maker, where under one sin mentioned all the species and appendances and the whole claim of that wickedness is wont to be comprised, doubtless it is utterly insufferable. Neither is here any

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extension of this prohibition beyond those limits which God hath fixed in the undoubted sense of his law. In the seventh commandment nothing is expressed but adultery: shall we therefore say, neither fornication nor pollution nor sodomy is there forbidden? were not this to destroy that law which God makes to be spiritual, and to open the floodgates to a torrent of licentiousness? Surely, it is easy to observe, that God's Spirit no less means that, which he pleaseth to suppress. The Psalmist says, *Promotion comes neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south*, Ps. lxxv. 6: shall we therefore say, "It is from the north?" is not that coast equally excluded, though not expressed? It is too much boldness, to hold God too strictly to syllables, when it is easy to determine what he meant to imply.

These rules then are useless.

Let me see now, if the advocate can as easily shake off one or two rules of law which I shall return upon him in lieu of his. *Is committet in legem, &c.*: "He wrongs the law who, keeping close to the letter, strives against the intent and purpose of the law." And that other, not unlike, *In fraudem legis facit, qui, salvis verbis legis, sententiam ejus circumvenit*: if this be not the case in hand, I shall profess to know nothing.

From rules let us look to authorities.

"It is directly maintained," he saith, "by the canonists and schoolmen:"—but what is it that is so maintained? Not this match: let no man think so; but that proposition, viz. That this match is no where directly forbidden in God's law. If we take it of express terms, no wise man ever denied it: not canonists and schoolmen only, or those few named authors, but all reasonable men concur in this truth: what needs a citation of some where all agree? But if we take it of the necessary and clear sense of the law by just analogy and infallible implication, now none of the forecited, or any other orthodox authors, will deny the certain and indubitable prohibition of this marriage. How well the rest will speed, judge by their foreman, Tho. Aquinas, who expressly determines it a false position, that those are joined together by God who match within the fourth degree; whereas this is in the third. Not to say how stiffly Peter Lombard urges the unlawfulness of marriages to the very seventh degree, *vel quosque parentela possit agnosci*, "even as far as the kindred may be discerned;" following herein pope Gregory and Nicholas. To shut up short, none of all his cited authors dare be any other than professed enemies to this

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match; no less than the most zealous commissioner of that now abolished court[z], whose late sentence is upon record, enough to this purpose. As for Lyra, who is trailed in here, and cited strongly in Othniel's case, what shall I say? It grieves my soul to see any well-minded Christian so abused by misinformation: this author hath thus; *Turpitudinem sororis, &c.*: "Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's sister, or thy mother's sister; *et eodem modo,* and in the same manner is forbidden the marriage betwixt the brother and the daughter of the aunt, for it is the same degree:" so Lyra: nothing can be more peremptory against this case, in favour of which he is alleged

This would be the issue of all the rest, if it were worth the while to examine them, in that which yielded nothing advanceth the cause of the producer. They are all as professed enemies to this match as myself: only they deny an express mention of this cause; which was never either thought needful or intended to be pleaded.

For the protestant divines which are cited to give testimony to the non-prohibition of this marriage, I must cry shame upon those false hands, which have so palpably abused both your friend and the author's. Let me give but a taste of some, Melancthon, Zanchius, Bucanus, who are said to allow the match, by admitting only the degrees mentioned to be prohibited. No place is instanced: *versatur in generalibus.* You know the word, but let your eyes be judges of their opinion. Melancthon, mentioning the marriage of Abraham and Sarah, in the second degree, *Hoc gradu,* saith he, *in linea inæquali, &c.* "In this degree, in an unequal line, marriages are forbidden by God's law, because God doth universally ordain a greater reverence to be yielded to a superior degree than to an equal." It is the very case in hand, which Melancthon thus sentenceth. For Zanchius, he citing the text of Lev. xviii. 13: *Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister;* adds, *Ergo neque materteram, &c.* "Therefore no man," saith he, "may marry his aunt; and that charge which he gives concerning the aunt would God have to be understood also of the uncle, which is the father's brother, or the mother's brother; while he adds a reason of the prohibition, *for she is the near kinswoman of thy father or mother.*" Thus Zanchius, in his book *De Operibus Dei,* lib. iv. *de Sponsalibus,* who absolutely condemns this marriage as incestuous and indispensable. Bucanus, moving

[z] [The Court of High Commission abolished by Act of Parliament, 1641.]

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the case of Abraham's marriage with Sarah, and Amram's with Jochebed, &c. leaves it in doubt whether these men were, as the times stood, particularly dispensed with by God; or whether they sinned in thus marrying, even before the law, against the law of nature, by which he holds these matches utterly prohibited.

With what forehead then could any scholar obtrude these false allegations upon an honest client, whether to draw his foot into a snare, or to keep it there, under pretence of favouring what they professedly oppose?

As for the modern Jews, to whom he stretches out his hand for succour, it matters little what they now teach or do. They are not more without God than without honesty or credit. Their opinions are fabulous, their judgment frivolous, and their practice not worth our knowledge or regard.

I rather descend to the resolution of our own Church. That our ever honoured mother hath passed her condemnatory sentence upon this marriage, in her ratification of that orthodox and just table of forbidden degrees, set forth by authority under archbishop Parker, what doubt we now? Do we acknowledge the oracular voice of our dear and holy mother, the Church of England, and yet question whether we should obey it? Certainly, in a case of conscience, a dutiful son, methinks, should rather hold fit to follow the sacred determination of the Church than the municipal acts of the civil state. It is an ill office of those that would set church and state, canons and statutes together by the ears, even in these points wherein they are perfect friends.

The statute of 32 of Hen. VIII. c. 38, intending to mar the Romish market of gainful dispensations and injurious prohibitions, professeth to allow all marriages that are not prohibited by God's law. Such is this in hand; prohibited, though not in the letter, yet in necessary inference and interpretation. The canon 99 of 1603 hath thus: "No person shall marry within the degrees prohibited by the laws of God, and expressed in a table set forth by authority in the year 1563; and all marriages so made and contracted shall be adjudged incestuous and unlawful." What scruple can arise hence? here is a perfect harmony betwixt statute and canon. It is a mere cavil, no better, to take "and" for "or;" as if the meaning were, that all degrees, whether prohibited by the law of God or expressed in that table, are forbidden. This is a foul stain, both to grammar and to the sense and scope of the canon; which plainly intends to aver, that all those degrees pro-

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hibited in that table are also forbidden by the laws of God: a truth so certain, that if either self love or love of gain did not betray the eye, it is a wonder how it should abide a contradiction. It is observable, that neither statute nor canon speaks of an express prohibition in God's law: and the canon purposely distinguisheth the terms prohibited by God's law, and expressed in the table; as justly supposing there may be as strong a prohibition in a sense implied as verbally expressed: else, if our laws, as is pretended, should give allowance, which God forbid, to any marriages not expressly, *in terminis*, forbidden, we should have strange and uncouth mixtures.

God, by Moses, expressly forbade the uncovering of the nakedness of father and mother: he expressed not the nakedness of son and daughter. He expressly names the nakedness of the father's wife: he expresseth not the nakedness of the mother's husband. He expressly names *the nakedness of thy sister:* he expresseth not *the nakedness of thy brother.* He expresseth *the nakedness of thy son's daughter:* he expresseth not *the nakedness of thy daughter's son.* He expresseth *the nakedness of thy father's wife's daughter:* he expresseth not the mother's husband's son. He expresseth the father's sister; not the mother's brother. He expresses the daughter-in-law; not the son-in-law. So as, by this rule, if it should be carried only by mere verbal expressions, a woman might marry her son-in-law; the nephew might marry his great-aunt; the niece, her great-uncle; the daughter might marry her mother's husband's son; the grandmother might marry her daughter's son; the daughter might marry with her mother's husband. Were these things to be allowed, the world would be all Sodom. These things, therefore, are of necessity included in the law by a clear analogy, no less than if they had been expressed. "But have there been," as he saith, "precedents of this match?" I am sorry to hear it. Surely, the more, the worse; and the more need to redress it. The addition of this, if neglected, would help to strengthen an ill claim.

"Cousins-german," he saith, "have been allowed to marry:" —What is that to the present case? The difference is as much as betwixt a nephew and an uncle. The uncle hath too much of the parent's, both right and blood, to challenge an equal claim with a cousin.

In the shutting up, it pities me to see your worthy friend

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driven to this plea; and, like a drowning man, to snatch at so small a twig. "Being done," he saith, "it ought not to be undone:"—Alas! the canon is peremptory. It is incestuous and unlawful. What plea is there for continuance? Speak not, therefore, of either connivance or dispensation. This match is only capable of a late, but much-wished repentance, on the offender's part: and a just diremption, on the part of the judges.

CASE II.—"Whether it be lawful for a man to marry his wife's brother's widow?"

Amongst all the heads of case-divinity there is no one that yieldeth more scruples than this of marriage; whether we regard the qualification of the persons or the emergency of actions and events.

It is the lawfulness of this match that you inquire after, not the expedience; and I must shape my answer accordingly.

It hath been the wisdom and care of our godly and prudent predecessors, to ordain a table of all the prohibited degrees to be publicly hanged up in all the several churches of this nation, to which all comers might have recourse for satisfaction. This catalogue you have perused, and find no exception of the case specified. I know no reason, therefore, why you may not conclude it not unlawful.

The question of the expedience would require another debate. Doubtless, in all cases of this nature, it must needs be yielded, that it were more meet and safe, since the world yields so large a latitude of choice, to look farther off. A wise and good man will not willingly trespass against the rules of just expedience, and will be as careful to consider what is fit to be done as what is lawful. But that comes not, at this time, within your inquiry.

While therefore I give my opinion for the lawfulness of this marriage with the relict of the wife's brother, I do no whit clash, as you suggest, with the judgment of Beza and Mr. Perkins, who profess their dislike of such copulations. I shall as readily cry them down for unmeet and inconvenient, as those that, with too much boldness, come over-near to the verge of a sinful conjunction: but for the not unlawfulness of this match, I did, upon the first hearing, give my affirmative answer; and the more I consider of it, am the more confirmed in that resolution.

That universal rule mentioned by you, as laid down by those two worthy authors, must endure a limitation; *Cujus non licet*

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inire nuptias, ejus nec conjugis licet; That there is the same degree and force of relation of a third person, in the case of marriage, to the husband and to the wife; so as proximity of blood in the one should not be a greater bar than the same proximity of alliance in the other: otherwise, many more copulations will fall under censure than common practice will condescend unto. And that ground of *uxor pars quædam viri,* "the wife is as a part of the husband," as it holds not in natural relation at all, so not in all conjugal; as might be too easily instanced in divers particulars.

And if there were not some difference in these relations, those second persons, which are interested in the husband or wife, might not come near to the next in affinity to them. For example: my brother may not marry my sister: therefore, by this rule, he might not marry my wife's sister; and so it should be unlawful for two brothers to marry two sisters; than which nothing is more ordinary, or less obnoxious to disallowance.

That general rule, therefore, must be restrained necessarily to the first rank of affinity. If we descend lower, it holds not.

For further explanation, our civilians and canonists are wont to make two kinds or degrees of affinity: the one, primary; the other, secondary.

In the first is the affinity between the husband and the cousins of blood to his wife, or *e converso;* which indeed is justly held no less for a bar of marriage than his own natural consanguinity; for that is an affinity contracted upon interest of blood, by virtue of that entire union between man and wife whereby they both become one flesh.

The secondary affinity is that wherein there is another person added moreover to that first kind now mentioned; the affinity arising only from the interest of an affinity formerly contracted, not from consanguinity: and this is not so binding as either to hinder a marriage to be contracted, or, being contracted, to dissolve it.

In this rank are the brother's wife and sister's husband; and therefore, upon the decease of the brother and sister, the husband of the sister deceased, and the wife of the deceased brother may marry together; as Dr. Nicholaus Everhardus, out of Richardus de Media Villa and Panormitan, hath clearly determined[c].

[c] Consil. Matrimonial. Germanor. Consil. 5.

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Of this kind is the marriage now questioned; which, therefore, doth not fall within the compass of the prohibition. *Secundum genus affinitatis, &c.:* "The second kind of affinity, which is by a person added unto the first kind, is no bar to matrimony." And with this judgment I find no reason why I should not concur: but if any man think that he sees just ground to entertain a contrary opinion, I prejudge him not; but modestly leave him to the freedom of his own thoughts.

CASE III.—"Whether an incestuous marriage, contracted in simplicity of heart, betwixt two persons ignorant of such a defilement, and so far consummate as that children are born in that wedlock, ought to be made known and prosecuted to a dissolution?"

It is a question, as it may be put, full of doubt and intricacy.

Parallel whereunto, and eminent in this kind, was that case which I had long since from the relation of Mr. Perkins, and since that, have met with it in the report of two several German authors.

The case thus: A gentlewoman, of great note in those parts, being left a widow, had her son trained up in her house; who, now having passed the age of his puberty, grew up, as in stature, so in wanton desires; earnestly soliciting her chambermaid to his lust. She had the grace not only to repel his offers, but being wearied with his wicked importunity, to complain to her mistress of his impetuous motions. The mother, out of a purpose to repress this wild humour in her son, bids the maid, in a seeming yieldance, to make appointment the night following with him; at which time she would change beds with the maid, and school the young man to purpose. This being accordingly done, the devil so far prevailed with the mother, that, instead of chastising, she yielded to the lust of her son, and by him conceived a daughter. And now, finding herself to grow big, for the hiding of her shame, she retired secretly to a remote part of the country; where she, unknown, left the burden of her womb, and took order for all care and secresy of education. After some years, the mother thinks fit to call home her concealed issue, under the pretence of a kinswoman, and gives her such breeding in her house as might become the child of a friend. The maid grew up to such comeliness, both of person and behaviour, that the son, now grown a man, fell into passionate love with her, and in short married her; little thinking that he was now matched with his own daughter, begotten by him

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of his own mother. They lived lovingly and comfortably together, and had divers children betwixt them. Only the mother, who was alone conscious of this monstrous copulation, began to find an hell in her bosom; and in a deep remorse made the case at last known to some learned divines of that time, who bestowed many serious thoughts upon so uncouth a business, and finally agreed upon this determination:—That, all circumstances throughly weighed, the penitent mother should, after a sound humiliation, secretly make her peace with God, for so foul and prodigious a sin; but that the knowledge of the horrible incestuousness of this match should still and ever be concealed from the young couple, who thought of nothing but a fair and honest legality in this their conjunction.

The decision of this point comes somewhat home to yours.

To spend my opinion therefore in this case, I find no reason, all things considered, to vary from their judgment.

I say then, that the mother's sin was not more heinous, in yielding to so abominable an act of incest with her son, than in smothering the seasonable notice of it, for the preventing of a worse incest with her daughter: for that first act of her incest was transient; but this incest, which was occasioned by her silence, was permanent, and derivable to her posterity. She ought therefore, though to her perpetual shame, when she saw an inclination in her son to so foully unnatural a match, to have forestalled it by a free confession, and to have made him sensible of so odious a procreation; which not being done, it must needs be said, that, as the first act of the son was a voluntary fornication, but an involuntary incest, so this incestuous copulation of the son with the daughter was involuntary in them both; and there cannot be an actual sin wherein there is not a consent of the will.

On the one side, it is shameful to think that so grievous a sin should pass without some exemplary censure: and that so foul blood should be propagated to succeeding ages, for want of the timely intervention of a vindicative authority: but, on the other side, it should be well considered, what miserable inconveniences, yea mischiefs, would follow upon so late a discovery.

First, all honest hearts are put into a just, but unprofitable horror, to think that such a flagitious wickedness could be committed. Then the mother, who had rinsed her soul with a fountain of tears for so hateful a miscarriage, and reconciled herself

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to that God who was the only witness of her sin, should be so late exposed to the unseasonable shame of that world which never was privy to her offence. As for the young couple thus prodigiously conjoined, how could they choose, upon the too late notice of their so deplorable condition, but run mad for anguish of soul, and wear out the rest of their days in shame and sorrow? And for the children, born to them in so detestable a wedlock, whom they had formerly beheld with complacence and comfort, as the sweet pledges of their conjugal love, how must they now needs look upon them as the living monuments of their ignominy, and loathe them, as the most basely begotten imps of a worse than bestial copulation! And when riper age should bring that unhappy offspring forth into the world, how should they be every where pointed at and hooted after, as some strange aberrations of nature! All which are avoided by this secresy.

But if, on the other side, you shall reply, that this one evil is more than equivalent to all these; That, in the mean time, these parties live in a continual incest, and traduce it to following generations; I must put you in mind, to distinguish betwixt the state of incest, and the sin of incest. It is true, they live in a state of incest; but from the sin of incest they are excused by an ignorance altogether invincible: an ignorance, both of the original fact and of their mutual relations. For it is to be supposed that, had they had the least intimation of the natural interest of father and daughter, they would with much indignation have defied so foul a commixture; which even brute creatures, if we may believe histories, have, by the instinct of nature, abominated; and, upon after-knowledge, revenged. And, if any light of knowledge had broken forth unto the parties of that condition wherein they stood, then to have continued under that state of incest but an hour, had been damnably sinful: now, all those inevitable consequences of shame and horror must have been slighted and forgotten; and must have shut up in a sudden dissolution.

But as there are many degrees of incest, and the sin is so much more or less heinous as the parties are nearer or more remote, I perceive the case intimated by you concerns a lower rank of incestuous copulation, namely, an incest arising from a man's carnal knowledge of a person too near in blood unto her whom he afterwards marrieth; the fact known only by one, who now doubts whether he be not bound to reveal it.

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And why not sooner, when so faulty a match might have been prevented? why so late, when the remedy intended would be as noxious as the disease? why at all, when there is no necessity or use of the revelation?

This question starts another more universal, How far we may or ought to make known the secret sin of another.

Doubtless, to prevent some enormous act, which may follow upon our silence; or upon the urging of lawful authority, when we are called to give evidence concerning a fact questioned; or to antevert some great danger to the public, to ourselves, to our friend; we may and must disclose our knowledge of a close wickedness; or, if the act be so heinously flagitious, and redounding to so high dishonour of God, as that our conscience tells us we shall participate of this sin in concealing it, our holy zeal shall herein bear us out in a just accusation; although, in this case, heed must be taken that our single crimination may be so carried and made good by circumstances that it draw us not into the peril of a slander.

But without these I cannot see that the revealing of a secret sin can be construed any otherwise than an act of detraction; than which nothing can be more odious and prejudicial to human society.

We have learned from Aquinas, that there are eight ways of this hateful practice; whereof four are direct—the raising of a false crime, the amplifying of a true crime, the disclosing of a crime secret, and the sinister construction of another's fact.

To these I must add, that even where the act is such as challengeth a revelation, the time may be unseasonable and past the date. You know that the notice of treason, if too long smothered, draws the concealer into danger; and in this case, though there be no peril in the silence, yet there may be injury.

Shortly, this sin, if ever, should have been so early made known to the party concerned as might have prevented the making up of a match secretly sinful, and have convinced the agent of a foul illegality, whereof he was ignorant; but now, thus over-late, would break out to an unprofitable vexation; since this crime, which might justly have hindered the marriage from being contracted, ought not to have the force, after so long intermission and success of an intervenient wedlock, to dissolve it. The time was when the minister, in a solemn preconization, called you either then to

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speak, or for ever after to hold your peace: had you then spoken it might have been construed as zeal; now, not to hold your peace will be interpreted no better than malice.

An Advertisement to the Reader.

I have been earnestly moved by some judicious friends to go on with this subject, and to make up a complete body of case-divinity, both practical, speculative, and mixed; whereof, I confess, there is great defect in our language. But I remember the talk which Plutarch reports[c] to have been betwixt Crassus and king Deiotarus, two old men, but great undertakers. Crassus jeers Deiotarus for laying the foundation of a new city in his decayed age; Deiotarus twits Crassus for going about, in the like age, to subdue the warlike Parthians: both justly supposing our decrepit age a just dissuasive from venturing upon great enterprises. Although herein I should not want a worthy precedent, that honour of Navarre, Martinus Azpilcueta, who, at ninety years, finished the fourth edition of that his elaborate Manual of Cases of Conscience. But as for me, I am sufficiently conscious of my own inabilities for so long and difficult a work; only this, I shall willingly profess that such scruples as I meet with in my way I shall not allow myself to balk, and shall leave the answers upon the file. In the mean time, let me incite some of our many eminent divines, whose wits are fresh and bodies vigorous, to go through with so useful a work. Many years are passed since my ancient and worthy colleague, Dr. Ralph Cudworth, told me that he had with much labour finished that task, and devoted it to the press; which yet sleeps in some private hands. It were happy if his worthy son, the just heir of his father's great abilities, would make strict inquiry after it, and procure it to the public light, for the common benefit of God's Church, both in the present and succeeding ages.

[c] Plut. in Vita Crassi. [Lond. ed. 1729. vol. iii. p. 270.]

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THE HOLY ORDER:

OR,

FRATERNITY OF THE MOURNERS IN SION.

HUMBLY AND EARNESTLY TENDERED TO ALL GOD'S FAITHFUL ONES.

WHEREUNTO IS ADDED

SONGS IN THE NIGHT:

OR,

CHEERFULNESS UNDER AFFLICTON.

TO MY WORTHY FRIEND,

MR. G. H.

SIR,—After my steadfast purpose of a silent obscurity for the small remainder of my days, I do now, once more, break loose again. The view of the danger and sad condition of the Church of God hath wrung these lines from me. You know the story of Cræsus's son: right so it is with me, upon sight of the mortal peril of our common and dearer parent. *For Sion's sake I will not* (I may not, I cannot) *hold my peace;* for my own, I would and shall. If, therefore, you believe that these papers may avail aught towards the public good, let them fly abroad out of your hands; since I have resolvedly shut my own, save only for their lifting up to Heaven for mercy to our Sion; wherein yourself, and all other faithful patriots of the spiritual Jerusalem, will heartily join with,

Your much devoted,

J. H.

FORASMUCH as there is no well-affected Christian that is not deeply sensible of the woful calamity of this once glorious Church, now humbled into the dust of confusion, and exposed to the pity of all those foreign neighbours which heretofore blessed it as a singular pattern of divine mercy, and to the scorn and insultation of Gath and Ascalon; and forasmuch as it is and hath been ever the practice of the enemies of our peace to range themselves into several ranks and files, under various forms, qualities, and denominations; as, on the one side, the society of Jesus, the order

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of the glorious Virgin, the archi-confraternity of the most holy Trinity, and the rest of this kind, not easy to be numbered; on the other side, Seekers, Quakers, Shakers, Dippers, the Holy Family of Love, Ranters, and such other prodigies of misreligion and faction; and thereby have found advantage several ways for the promoting of our ruin; why should it not be found requisite that we, the professed servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, orthodox and genuine sons of the Church of England, whose hearts are moved by the good Spirit of God to a just resentment of our miseries and dangers, should firmly resolve, for the countermining of these engineers of hell and conspirers of our destruction, to enter into a safe, warrantable, holy fraternity of mourners in Sion; whose profession and work shall be a peculiarity of devotion; striving, with fervent prayers and tears, to obtain from Heaven a seasonable redress of these our pressing calamities, and a prevention of that utter overthrow and final devastation which threatens this miserable Church wherein we do yet live?

And for this purpose may it be thought meet to tie ourselves, by our secret and silent vows, to these rules following:

1. That, without all offensive, tumultuous, and susceptible complottings and conventions, we shall hold up our private devotions, and perform these our godly undertakings to that premised end.

2. That there shall be no superiority or subordination in this holy fraternity, nor any soul more interested in it than other; and, therefore, no formality or ceremony of admittance into it, but a free and voluntary entrance left open for all comers into this strict course of Christian austerity, without any noise, without the required notice of any but God and their own conscience; that the world may well see and know that here is no other design than merely spiritual; aiming at nothing but religious transactions between God and our souls; and consisting in the performance of the unquestionable exercises of piety and holy devotion.

3. That we shall zealously excite our neighbours and friends to be passionately affected with this sad estate of God's Church, and to be liberal of their sighs and tears and prayers for the happy recovery of it.

4. That we will effectually endeavour to work our hearts to a sound humiliation for our own sins, which have helped to contribute to the common stock of our miseries; and daily renew our vows of a more strict and holy obedience, and a more close walking with our God.

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5. That we shall deeply take to heart and secretly mourn for and lament the sins of our people; representing them to our thoughts in their heinous nature and quality; humbly begging for their serious repentance of them, and earnestly deprecating the judgments provoked by them.

6. That, for this end, we shall do our best endeavour to get just notice of the sad estate of this distracted Church of ours, and to be truly apprehensive of the peril wherein it stands; as also of the horrible blasphemies and damnable heresies which have been of late disgorged from the mouth of hell amongst us, and those hellish practices which have followed thereupon, to the high dishonour of the Majesty of that holy God whom we pretend to serve, to the utter shaming of that blessed Gospel which we profess: forasmuch as we cannot mourn for what we know not, nor mourn enough for what we do not know to be so transcendently sinful.

7. As of the sins whereby we have moved the fierce anger and wrathful displeasure of our God against us; so also shall we take full notice of the judgments whereby we have smarted from his most just hand; yea, in a larger comprehension of the judgments past, present, imminent. Amongst which, how can we but sorrowfully reckon the mutual effusion of so much Christian blood spilt by the hands of brethren; and, as the tribes of Israel did for Benjamin, bitterly mourn for the slain of our people? of whom so many on both parts have been swept away from the earth in the fury of a violent hostility, as might well have served to store a populous nation; or might probably have overrun the professed enemies of Christendom. To these we cannot but add the woful disasters and inexpressible miseries which do always inevitably attend an intestine war. But of all judgments, none have cause to make so deep an impression in us as the spiritual; as knowing that as our God is terrible in all his inflictions, so most of all where he is least felt; when he pays us in our own coin; when he punishes us with our sins; making one sin the revenger and executioner of another; when he repays our actual rebellion against him with a senseless obdurateness, with a plausible security, and deadness of spirit; when he rewards our neglect and contempt of his ordinances with giving us up to spiritual delusions, and to the seductions of the spirit of error, to prodigious whimsies and heretical blasphemies. We shall then, as we have too just reason, lay together these evils that we feel with those which we have no less cause to fear; and under the

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sense of both, shall find our hearts pierced with sorrow, and resolved into the just tears of our mourning.

8. That we shall not fail, both by night and day, constantly to pour out our hearts, in strong cries and fervent prayer to our God, that he will be pleased, now at last, to visit this miserable and disconsolate Church, in mercy and compassion; and cause the light of his countenance to shine upon us once again.

9. That the matter of our prayers shall be the illumination and reduction of those our weak brethren, which offend through ignorance, and, out of a well-meant zeal, are, in the simplicity of their hearts, miscarried into erroneous ways, whether of doctrine or practice: for the merciful conversion of the not-obdured and wilful opposers of the truth: for the seasonable confusion of the desperately malicious enemies of God and his Church; for the settling of the Church of God in righteousness, order, and peace: for the prevalence and happy success of the Gospel, against all schism, heresy, errors in opinion, and wickedness of life: for the discovery and defeat of all the devices and machinations of Satan, and all his accursed instruments, against the Church of Christ in all parts of the world; and especially in these disjointed members of it, wherein we are interested: for the encouragement and prosperity of all those that are faithful in the land, and that are hearty well-wishers of our Sion: for the averting of those heavy and desolatory judgments which our sins have thus long and loud called for: and, lastly, for the making up of our deplorable breaches; and reuniting of all honest and faithful hearts in a firm concord and Christian love.

10. That we shall every week set apart one day for this holy purpose; wherein we shall humble ourselves in private fasting and prayer, till it shall please our God to return to us in his wonted compassion, and to put an end to these deadly distractions under which we labour.

11. That we shall willingly abridge ourselves of our wonted pleasure; not giving ourselves leave to enjoy any public meetings of mirth and jollity, nor take the liberty of those lawful recreations which we have formerly made use of, while the hand of God lies thus heavily upon this Church and nation.

12. That it shall be the desire of our hearts, that all, which shall condescend to join together in the profession of this holy fraternity, be knit together in an entire affection to one another, and be ready to show all mutual respects of Christian love and

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observance to each other upon all occasions; being withal, in all meekness of spirit, charitably affected to, and lovingly conversing with, those their brethren and neighbours which are not yet so sensible of the just cause of their humiliation.

13. That, in the conscience of our own wants and infirmities, we shall make it our care to spend our main censures upon ourselves and our own enormities; not being apt to fly out upon the weaknesses and defects of our brethren: bearing with those that are otherwise minded in matters of an inferior nature: not aggravating the blame of those their actions or opinions, which may be capable of a gentler and milder construction, and reserving the edge of our zeal for those foul and gross offences which carry open guilt in their faces, making head against them by all spiritual resistance and godly endeavours of reclamation.

14. That, whensoever we shall be called to deliver the message of God to his people in public auditories, we shall not fail to lay open and bewail the sins of the time, and to rouse up our hearer with all zealous exhortations to a lively sense of just sorrow for the universal overflowings of wickedness, and to a vehement and godly striving against the stream thereof, by their prayers and utmost endeavours.

15. That we shall heartily labour not to be found defective in the use of all good means whereby the peace and welfare of God's Church may be procured and maintained, and shall carefully avoid all such ways and means which may in any sort endanger the widening of the unhappy breaches, and multiplying of the many and miserable distractions thereof.

These are the laws to which we have thought fit in these doleful times to bind ourselves in the presence of that God, who hath graciously wrought in us a feeling compassion of the public evils; beseeching him, who is the Father of all mercies, to enable us, by the powerful operation of his good Spirit, to an effectual performance of all these our holy engagements; that, after the short time of our mourning in this vale of tears, we may be admitted to be the blessed partakers of that eternal joy, which abides for all his in heaven.

Christian brethren, of what quality soever, I cannot fear, lest it will seem too much boldness in me to invite you all to take part with me in this holy fraternity: which you shall highly wrong if ye shall look upon it as mine, or any merely human institution. No: the founder of it is in heaven. It is the charge of the Holy

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Ghost himself, by the hand of his Chosen Vessel, *Weep with them that weep,* Rom. xii. 15. If our tears therefore be, as they are, most just, ye are bound to add yours to them, and shall offend if ye forbear. Neither can ye be ignorant that the Son of God himself, while he was visibly here upon earth, did not only own it, as well pleasing to him, but encouraged it with a promise of an assured comfort, and crowned it with no less title than blessedness, Matt. v. 4; Luke vi. 21. And if ye look for a more ancient precedent, even before the Lord of life was manifested in the flesh, ye do apparently find this fraternity of singular note in old Jerusalem: ye know the man clothed in white linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side, had this charge from the mouth of the Lord himself: *Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof,* Ezek. ix. 4. Lo here a company of mourners marked out for mercy, even while the sanctuary is contemptuously defiled and all Jerusalem is in blood!

Shall I now need any other motive to win you into the brotherhood of this sacred order?

Know then, that *they which sow in tears shall reap in joy:* and *he that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him,* Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. Know that they are not tears, but pearls, that thus fall from your eyes; dearly precious to the Almighty, and carefully reserved in his casket for the decking of your souls to all eternity. Know that even the Lord of glory was *a man of sorrows,* and that he bedewed Jerusalem with his tears ere he watered it with his blood. If therefore ye will be moved, either with the sweet and infallible promises of a gracious acceptation and a blessed remuneration of everlasting comfort, or led by the precept or the example of that dear Saviour whose name ye profess to bear; refuse not, delay not, to enter yourselves into this holy, ancient, and highly privileged fraternity of mourners in Sion.

Mourn then, my brethren, mourn heartily: but, as the apostle in another case, *mourn not as men without hope.* Be not disheartened, all ye faithful mourners in Sion, as if ye were hopelessly condemned to a perpetual darking, and were doomed to dwell under a cloud of endless sorrow. The Almighty will find a time to have mercy upon his poor Church, and to clear up his

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countenance towards his chosen ones; wiping all tears from their eyes, and all spots from their faces, and answering the holy desires of their hearts, in showing them his Sion in her perfect beauty. Could we but weep soundly, he would smile upon us, and comfortably shine upon his sanctuary, and make the place of his feet glorious, even an eternal excellency, the joy of many generations.

Indeed, for the present, O our God, thou hast removed our souls far from peace; thou hast most justly filled us with thine indignation: for we have deserved that thou shouldest pour our iniquities upon us, and shouldest bring upon us the fruits of our own thoughts, and measure our works into our bosoms, and cause us to drink at thy hand the cup of thy fury, yea, even to have the dregs of the cup of trembling to be wrung out to us; for we have walked every one after the imagination of his own evil heart. Our transgressions are with us, and are multiplied before thee; and though we have professed to be humbled under thy mighty hand, we have not cried to thee in our hearts, when we howled upon our beds; neither have we loathed ourselves in our own sight for the evils that we have committed: so as we do now justly lie down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us; willingly acknowledging, that our iniquities have most deservedly turned away thy blessings from us, and drawn thy judgments upon our heads. But, O Lord, hast thou so smitten us that there is no healing for us? Have we put ourselves utterly out of the reach of thy boundless mercies? Art not thou the God that retainest not thy anger for ever, because thou delightest in mercy? O why shouldest thou then be to us *as a mighty man that cannot save? O thou, the hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof in time of trouble,* return, return to thy people in the tender bowels of thine infinite pity and compassion. Humble our souls thoroughly under the sense of our many backslidings and grievous provocations of the eyes of thy glory. O strike thou our heart with an unfeigned repentance of all our evil ways, and once again speak peace unto thy servants. Was there ever a more stiffnecked and rebellious people, O Lord, than thine Israel? more eminent in abused mercies? more notorious in all kinds of abominable wickedness? more exercised with variety of judgments? yet when they cried to thee in their distress, thou wert still ready to hear and deliver them, and to renew thy so often forfeited blessings upon them; and wouldest not let loose thy vengeance upon them till there was no remedy. Behold, we are thy

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people, though a sinful one; a second Israel, both for sins and mercies. Now Lord, since it is thy marvellous mercy that we are not yet consumed, be still pleased to magnify thy infinite goodness in thy gracious forbearances and our powerful conversion to thee. And though we cannot but confess that we are *a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers;* yet, Lord, thou knowest thou hast thy secret ones amongst us, a people that prayeth and trembleth at thy judgments, and waiteth humbly at the doorposts of thy sanctuary; a people that desire to walk close with thee their God, and to be approved of thee in all their ways; a people that sigheth and mourneth for the abominable sins of the land of their nativity. O, for their sakes, be thou entreated to hold off thy revenging hand from this sinful nation, and even yet still provoke us by thy goodness to repentance. O thou, the righteous and merciful Judge of the world, who even for ten righteous persons wouldest have spared a Sodom and Gomorrah from their fiery execution, be pleased tenderly to regard the cries of thy many hundred faithful and devout souls, that sue to thee for the stay and removal of thy deserved judgments. *O do thou look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and thy glory* the unfeigned humiliation of thy servants who are prostrate before thee, with fastings and weeping and mourning. Turn away thy heavy displeasure from us, and pity thy sanctuary which is desolate. So shall our mouths be full of the praises of thy name, and thy saints shall rejoice and sing new songs unto the God of our salvation.

In the mean time we shall in silence and hope wait upon the Lord that hideth his face from Jacob, and not cease to pour out ourselves in tears and supplications to him that is mighty to save. Neither will we suffer our cheeks to be dry, or our souls to receive comfort, till we shall receive a gracious answer from heaven; and shall see that the Lord hath been pleased to show mercy to his Sion.

In this condition we that are Sion's mourners shall not need to be distinguished, as other orders are wont, by colours, devices, habiliments. Our qualifications will be easily discerned by our sad faces, wet eyes, deep sighs, mortified carriage, willing neglect of those vanities wherewith others are transported, our holy retiredness, assiduous devotions, and strict professions of godliness. Carry yourselves thus, dear brethren, and God and his angels shall gladly welcome you into that holy society of mourners, which

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shall be marked out for preservation here and for eternal comfort hereafter.

Lastly, let none of you discourage himself from entering into this sacred fraternity out of the sense of his bodily infirmity, or the urgent necessity of outward impediments. There is many an holy soul that dwells inconveniently in a crazy, tottering, ruinous cottage, ready to drop down daily upon his head, not able to endure the subtraction of one meal's support. There are not a few well affected Christians, whom the necessary exigencies of their calling and estate, like so many hard taskmasters, hold close to their tale of bricks, not allowing them the leisure of our limited devotion. Let all these of both kinds know, that they have no cause hereupon either to hold off or to think they shall in this case need the dispensation of any superior power, since their condition doth sufficiently dispense with itself. Even the severest casuists of the Roman Church, who are wont to be the rigidest exactors of the outward exercises of mortification, do, in these cases, allow of a just relaxation. My brethren, if ye cannot fast, yet ye can pray; if your stomachs be weak, yet your zeal may be strong. Ye can mourn, though ye pine not; and if ye cannot spare a day in seven, yet ye may spare an hour in twelve, and make up the rest in your frequent and fervent ejaculations. Shortly, if you have truly mourning souls, they will be accepted in the necessary want of the strict terms of bodily exercises.

Farewell, in the Lord.

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SONGS IN THE NIGHT;

OR,

CHEERFULNESS UNDER AFFLICTION.

TO MY DEAR AND WORTHILY RESPECTED FRIEND,

MR. G. H.

SIR,

I thank you for your comfortable letter, which came to me as a seasonable cordial after a strong potion.

It is true I have been no niggard of my good counsel to others in this kind, yet now could not but have need enough of it myself. So I have known experienced physicians, in their sickness, to call for their neighbour doctor's advice, and to make use of his prescript rather than their own. Although also I have not been altogether negligent in the speedy endeavour of my own cure, as you will see by this enclosed meditation.

Indeed, it pleased my God lately, as you well know, to exercise me with a double affliction at once; pain of body, and grief of mind for the sickness and death of my dear comfort. I struggled with them both, as I might; and by God's mercy attained to a meek and humble submission to that just and gracious hand, and a quiet composedness of thoughts; but yet methought I found myself wanting in that comfortable disposition of heart, and lively elevation of spirit, which some holy souls have professed to feel in their lowest depression; fetching that inward consolation from heaven, which can more than counterpoise their heaviest crosses.

Upon this occasion you see here how I held fit to busy my thoughts; labouring by their holy agitation to work myself, through the blessing of the Almighty, to such a cheerful temper as might give an obedient welcome to so smarting an affliction; and that even while I weep I might yet smile upon the face of my heavenly Father, whose stripes I do so tenderly suffer.

If in some other discourses I have endeavoured to instruct others, in this I mean to teach myself, and to win my heart to a willing and contented acquiescence in the good pleasure of my God, how harsh soever it seems to rebellious nature. Take this, then, as a thankful return of your consolatory discourse to me, and help him still with your fervent prayers, who is

Your faithfully devoted friend and fellow labourer,

J. H. B. N.

REVEREND SIR,

What a rich gainer have you made me, in improving those poor sparks, which my dulness could strike out, into a flame! I will now wonder no more to see the bee extract honey out of the meanest flower.

This treasure of comfortable thoughts you have been pleased to return,

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how can I value sufficiently? Songs in the Night, indeed! in which you show the strong composedness of your soul, victorious, and holily insulting over whatsoever afflictions you have been assaulted with. With David's harp and such songs, what mutinous evil spirit may not be charmed and allayed? what dull spirit not elevated?

That nearest loss, which gave you the occasion of thus settling your thoughts, I cease to condole; being more ready to gratulate to you the happy advantage you have made of it.

Let me also, in the world's behalf, acknowledge with gratitude the benefit it hath received from you in those your latter tracts, which it owes to your secession. Whatsoever others do, you, I am sure, have brought forth more fruit in your age; and that, such as gives evidence of the ever-living vigour of your mind. Men do find still the same nerves and sinews, the same vivacity and fluency as ever.

Here give me leave, I beseech you, for I cannot forbear to take the liberty of quarrelling with you, as I have just cause, for that over hasty farewell you have taken of the world and the press. How, sir, can you think yourself discharged as *Emeritus*, notwithstanding all the great services you have done to God's Church, when they take notice of your still continuing strength? This age of ours, which as yourself have complained hath more brain than heart, and of which Lipsius may seem to have given the truest censure, *nulla unquam ætas fertilior religionis, sterilior pietatis*, wants more quickenings of devotion; and yours especially, which flow so experimentally from you; not as some others, of whom it hath been said, *eorum oratio in ore nascitur, non in pectore*.

Among other of your tracts, give me leave to say your "Select Thoughts" do especially make good their title. In those, you have grasped and taken in the most vital notions; and if the Christian find not his soul filled with marrow and fatness, it is because he hath not made those thoughts his own; and though I acknowledge them very complete, and needing no addition, yet another edition of them, with your "Breathings of the Devout Soul," being greedily desired, suffer me thus far to offer violence to your fixed purpose of appearing no more in the press, as to presume upon your not angry reluctance to a publishing of this your comfortable meditation, by which you may lift up many drooping spirits that are ready to sink under their pressures in these evil times. Let this at least persuade you it is in some danger to be ravished from me, and may perhaps steal abroad in a worse dress, or not in such company as now it may have with its fellows.

Sir, you may thus far acquit me: I am not envious in this motion, while I adventure this for the public good, to have that made beneficial to others which I might closely have engrossed to myself. If you chide me not downright for thus anticipating your leave to make you better than your word, I shall have the confidence to take it, *ex post facto*, for granted.

I now commit you to those your happy enjoyments of God and yourself, and rest, Sir,

Your very much and deservedly devoted,

G. H.

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SONGS IN THE NIGHT.

Section I.

When thou saidst, O Saviour, *The night cometh, when no man can work*, John ix. 4, thou didst not mean to exclude the work of thy praise. There is no time wherein that can be unseasonable: yea, rather, as all our artificial melody is wont to sound sweetest in the dark, so those songs are most pleasing to thee which we sing in the saddest night of our affliction.

O God, it is easy for those whose *bones thou hast filled with marrow* (Job xxi. 24) to be cheerful; but to make *the bones which thou hast broken* to *rejoice* (Ps. li. 8), it is doubtless the praise of thy mercy. It was the charge of thy blessed apostle, that *if any man be afflicted*, he should *pray; if merry*, he should *sing psalms*, James v. 13; and this, doubtless, is the ordinary temper of a Christian soul; but if a man can be so affected as to pray fervently in the height of his mirth, and to sing cheerfully in the depth of his affliction, he can be no other than eminent in grace, and strongly wrought upon by the God of all comfort.

It is a true word of Elihu, thou only, *O God*, our *Maker*, art he *that givest songs in the night*, Job xxxv. 10. The night is a dismal season, attended with solitude and horror, and an aggravation of those pains and cares whereof the day is in any sort guilty. The light, besides a natural cheeriness, may afford some diversions of sorrow, and present us with such objects and occurrences as may somewhat allay the sensibleness of our grief; but the night takes part with our misery, and adds no little to our discomfort. Songs, therefore, in the night, are not, cannot be of nature's making, but are the sole gift of the heavenly Comforter.

And if we, out of the strength of our moral powers, shall be setting songs to ourselves in the night of our utmost disconsolation, woe is me, how miserably out of tune they are! how harsh, how misaccented, how discordous even to the sense of our own souls, much more in the ears of thee the Almighty, in whom dwells nothing beneath an infinite perfection!

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But the songs that thou, O God, puttest into the mouths of thy servants in the night of their tribulation are so exquisitely harmonious, as that thine angels rejoice to hear them, and disdain not to match them with their hallelujahs in heaven.

Could there be a more gloomy night than that which thy servants Paul and Silas spent in the gaol of Thyatira [Philippi]? Acts xvi. Prisons are, at the best, darksome; it being one part of the punishment of offenders to be debarred of the benefit of the light. But this, to make it more sad, was the inner prison, the dungeon of that woful gaol: where yet they are not allowed the liberty either to move or stand, but have their hands manacled, and their feet fast locked in the stocks. There lie thy two precious servants, in little ease; their backs smarting with their late merciless stripes; their legs galled with their pinching restraint: when in their midnight thou gavest them songs of such sweetness and power, that the very earth and stones of their prison did move, and as it were dance at that melody; the doors fly open; the fetters fall off; the keeper trembles; the whole house is filled with affright and amazement. The fellow-prisoners, whose durance had been inured to nothing but sighs and moans, wondered to hear such music in their cold cells at midnight; but when they felt their irons shaken off, and the bolts burst, and the doors seeming to invite them to a sudden liberty, how were they astonished to think of the power of that heavenly charm which had wrought so miraculous a change!

Section II.

Neither was it otherwise with the rest of those blessed messengers of glad tidings of salvation. What other was it than the night of persecution with Peter and the other apostles, when they were scourged for preaching the gospel of peace? How pleasing songs didst thou give them in this night of their pain! Neither were their backs more full of weals than their mouths of laughter, for *they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for* the name of Jesus, Acts v. 41.

And as all these are animated by one and the same spirit, what other was the disposition and carriage of all those glorious martyrs and confessors of all times which sealed the truth of the gospel with their blood? When the night was darkest, their songs were sweetest. Even when tyranny had wearied itself

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with their torments, their exultations were at the highest. Never have there been more heavenly ditties than those which have been sung at the stake: neither hath any man gone with more joy to his wedding than these holy souls have gone to meet their Saviour in those flames.

Section III.

Neither may we think that the melody of these nightly songs hath been only reserved for these evangelical worthies; but the same divine notes have been put into the mouths of all God's saints in all ages of his Church. The distresses of all the darlings of God upon earth have still been thus alleviated with the divine strains of spiritual comfort.

Such were the songs of Noah, when from the close prison of the ark he descended to the altar, offering a cheerful sacrifice to his God in the praise of his gracious preservation, Gen. viii. 20. Such was Jacob's, upon his hard night's lodging in Bethel. Such was Joseph's in Pharaoh's gaol. Such was Moses's, more than once, in the desert. Such was Jonah's in *the belly of hell*, as he styles the loathsome gorge of the dreadful sea monster, Jonah ii. 2.

But, above all, the sweet singer of Israel must pass for the most glorious pattern, not only of the sacred music of the day but of songs also in the night. Those heavenly composures of his represent him to us as never void either of troubles or gratulations, yea, of cheerful gratulations in the midst of his troubles. Do I hear him passionately bewailing his heavy condition: *My soul is sore troubled: I am weary of my groaning: every night wash I my bed with my tears?* Ps. vi. 3, 6. Lo, whilst I am ready to pity his hopeless distress, and to say, "Alas! what evil will become of this woful soul?" comfort breaks forth from heaven, and the next breath triumphs over the insultations of his enemies, and cheers him up with a confident assurance of mercy: *Away from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping*, ver. 8. It was no small pang of discomfort that made him say, *Thou didst turn away thy face from me, and I was troubled*, Ps. xxx. 7. Lo, this was David's night, when the sun of heavenly consolations was withdrawn from him: will you hear his song in this night? *Lord, thou hast turned my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with*

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gladness, ver. 11. The case may seem to have been much worse with him when he cries out, *Thy hand is heavy upon me day and night, and my moisture is like the drought of summer*, Ps. xxxii. 4: but in the darkest night of his sorrow, his song is loud and cheerful: *Thou shalt preserve me from trouble: thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Be glad, ye righteous, and rejoice in the Lord; and be joyful, all that are true of heart*, verses 7, 11. What was it other than night with him when he complains to be neglected of the Highest? *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord; for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?* Ps. xiii. 1: and what merrier note could there be than that which he instantly sings: *But my trust is in thy mercy, and my heart is joyful in thy salvation: I will sing of the Lord, because he hath dealt so bountifully with me?* verses 5, 6. Lastly, for nothing were more easy than to trace the footsteps of the holy Psalmist through all his heavenly ditties, no night could be equally dark to that wherein he cries out, *The snares of death compassed me round about, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me*, Ps. cxvi. 3: no song could be sweeter than *gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful: I was in misery, and he helped me. Turn again to thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee: for thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling*, verses 5—8.

SECTION IV.

But what do I instance in these singular patterns of an holy cheerfulness under affliction, when the Chosen Vessel ranks it amongst the gracious dispositions of the faithful soul? *Not so only*, saith he to his Roman converts, *but we glory in tribulations also*, Rom. v. 3. And his fellow apostle no less sweetly seconds him: *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations*, James i. 2.

Lo, these divine oracles do not tell us of joy after our sorrows and afflictions: this were no news to God's children in this vale of tears: *Weeping may endure for a night*, saith the Psalmist, *joy cometh in the morning*, Ps. xxx. 5; but they speak of joy in the very brunt of our sufferings: as if they laid before us Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego singing in the midst of their flames, Dan. iii.

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This is a temper of the soul not more excellent than hard to be attained. We all aspire towards it: not many reach up to it. To be patient under a heavy cross is no small praise; to be contented is more; but to be cheerful is the highest pitch of Christian fortitude. Not to send forth the juice of sorrow, such is our tears, when we are hard pressed, is manly; but to smile upon torture, and to sing when others shriek, is no less than heroical.

There is, I confess, no little advantage this way in the difference of constitutions: whereof some are more soft and melting, others more hardy and obdurate: some are naturally more malleable to afflictions, others more waxen to all impressions of grief. Wise Seneca observed some in his time that took a kind of pride and contentment in being slashed and mangled; whereas others for but a box on the ear are ready to cry out "Murder." The valiant Goths held it a perpetual shame for one of their swordmen to wink in receiving a wound, whenas a delicate Sybarite[a] complains that the rose leaves lie doubled under his back.

But as weak hearts do commonly break under heavy afflictions, so the strongest shall find it difficult enough not to buckle under the weight of some crosses: but to go lightly and nimbly away with the most pressing load of this kind is more than a merely human strength can perform. Neither would the Holy Ghost have appropriated to himself the title of *Comforter*, and the *God of all comfort*, if any mortal power could be able to do this great work without him, John xiv. 26; 2 Cor. i. 3; Isa. li. 12.

Section V.

The Holy Spirit then, as being a most free agent, is sometimes pleased immediately to cast into the soul the comfortable gleams of heavenly consolations; but ordinarily he causeth this gracious cheerfulness in the heart of believers, by working them to strong resolutions grounded upon powerful and irrefragable motives; such as are fetched from the Author, the intention, the nature, the issue of our affliction.

The Temanite said well—*Affliction cometh not forth from the dust; neither doth trouble spring out of the ground*, Job v. 6. It is not of so base an original as earth, but derives itself from heaven, even from the Father of all mercies. That great and

[a] Mindyrides.

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holy God, who is most justly jealous of his own honour, will not lose the glory of working and managing the far greater part of human occurrences: since the contentments that we can hope for are not the tithe of those miseries which we must look to meet with in this our earthly pilgrimage. This right, therefore, the Almighty wholly challengeth to himself: *I make peace, and create evil; I, the Lord, do all these things,* Isa. xlv. 7. *Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?* saith the prophet, Amos iii. 6.

Why then do I not thus argue with myself in my sufferings?

"Is it not the hand of my good God that lies thus heavy upon me? Can I but acknowledge him to be a God of infinite wisdom and infinite mercy? If of infinite wisdom, how can he but know what is best for me? if of infinite mercy, how can he but do what he knows to be best? And if it be best for me to suffer, why should I not be cheerful in suffering? What do I looking to second hands? This man, that beast; this fever, that tempest; this fire, that inundation, are but his rods: the hand is his that wields them: their malignity is their own: nothing but goodness proceeds from him that useth them to my advantage: *It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good,* 1 Sam. iii. 18. If but as a creature, O God, thou hast full right to dispose of me as thou wilt; I am thy clay, fashion me as thou pleasest: but as thy redeemed one, as thine adopted one, I have full and dear interest in thee as a Father; and thou canst be no other than thyself. Let it not be enough for me to hold my peace, because thou, Lord, hast done it; but let me break silence in praising thy name, for that thou *in very faithfulness and love hast afflicted me,* Ps. cxix. 75. The *fathers of our flesh,* even though they whip us unduly and out of passion, yet we kneel to their persons, and cling to their knees, and kiss their rods: how much more should I adore thine infinite goodness in all thy holy, righteous, merciful corrections! It is for a slave to grudge at the scourges of a cruel master: he is not worthy to pass for thy child that receives not thy stripes with reverent meekness. Tears may be here allowed; but a reluctant frown were no better than rebellion. Let infidels, then, and ignorants who think they suffer by chance, and impute all their crosses to the next hand, looking no higher than their own heads, repine at their adversities and be dejected with their afflictions; for me, who know that I have a Father in heaven full of mercy and

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compassion, whose providence hath measured out to a scruple the due proportions of my sorrows, counting my sighs, and reserving the tears which he wrings from me in his bottle; why do I not patiently lie down and put my mouth in the dust (Lament. iii. 29), meekly submitting to his holy pleasure, and blessing the hand from which I smart?"

Section VI.

The intent of the agent must need work a great difference in our construction of the act.

An enemy, we know, strikes with an intention to wound and kill: no father means to maim his child in beating him; his tender heart is far from intending any bodily hurt to the fruit of his loins. The chirurgeon and the excutioner do both the same act: both cut off the limb; but the one to save a patient, the other to punish an offender.

O Father of mercies, since it is thou that strikest me, I know thou canst have no other thoughts but of love and compassion to my soul. O thou heavenly Physician, if thou hast decreed me to be blooded or cauterized, I know it cannot be but for my health; and if for my bodily cure, I do not only admit of these painful remedies, but reward them: how should I bless thee for this beneficial pain thou puttest me to for my spiritual and eternal welfare! What an unthankful wretch shall I be, if I be not more sensible of thy favour than of my own complaint!

Thus much of thy will, O God, hast thou revealed to us as to let us know that all thine intentions in the afflictions of thy chosen ones have respect either to thyself or to them: to thyself, in the glory that redounds to thy name in their sustentation and deliverance; to them, whether for their trial or their bettering.

Thine Israel, O God, had never endured so hard a bondage under Pharaoh as to be over swelted in the Egyptian furnaces, to be laded with merciless stripes, to be stinted unto impossible tasks, had it not been to magnify thy almighty power in supporting them against the rage of tyranny, and revenging their wrongs upon their oppressors by miraculous plagues and an unexampled destruction.

When thy disciples, O Saviour, upon the sight of the poor blindborn beggar, took the boldness to ask thee who had sinned, *this man or his parents, that he was born blind;* it pleased thee to return them this quick answer, *Neither hath this man sinned*

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nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him, John ix. 3. Surely the event justified thy words. All the eyes of the beholders of this poor dark soul did not win so much glory to thee as this man's want of eyes, so omnipotently supplied by thy Divine power. Restoring of sight was nothing in comparison of creating it: nature and art hath done that; none but the God of nature could effect this. No doubt this now seeing beggar could not but bless thee for his blindness, that gave thee occasion of showing this miraculous proof of thy Deity; and applauded his own happiness in being made the subject of so convictive a miracle.

Had not Lazarus sickened, and died and smelt of the grave, where had been the glory which accrued to thee by his resuscitation?

Had not Daniel lodged in the lion's den, and the three children taken possession of the fiery furnace, where had been the glory of their admired preservation?

Most just it is then, O Lord, that thine eye should be most upon thine honour in our suffering; and just cause have we to rejoice and sing to thy praise, if thou have vouchsafed to make us in any sort examples of thy power and mercy.

SECTION VII.

But withal it pleases thee, in the intentions of our afflictions, to cast some glances of respect upon us thy weak servants upon earth, first.

For our trial and probation; how remarkable a proof whereof hast thou given us in that great pattern of patience! who had never been brought forth into the theatre of the world, to encounter with so prodigious calamities, had it not been to make good his challenged integrity. It was thy pleasure, in an holy kind of gloriation, to assert the sincerity of that gracious servant of thine. The envious spirit, as impatient of so much goodness to be found in man, maliciously traduces that piety as mercenary: thou, who knowest what grace thou hadst given him, yieldest to have it put to the test. The probation is beyond all example painful, but glorious. Job pays dear for the conviction of that lying spirit. His innocence and truth triumphs over malice, shames the adversary, wins honour to thy name, and renders him a rare and memorable example of mercy.

What are heresies but the spiritual distempers of the Church,

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the bane of religion, flashes of hell, breaking out for disturbance and destruction? yet there *must be heresies,* saith the apostle to his Corinthians, *that those which are approved may be made manifest among you,* 1 Cor. xi. 19. Lo, if there were no falsehood, truth would want much of her lustre; and if there were no enemy, what place would there be for victory?

Goodness is so conscious of its own worth and pureness that it rejoiceth to be tried home: hence it is, that the man after God's own heart makes it his earnest suit to his God: *Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart: for thy loving-kindness is before mine eyes; and I have walked in thy truth,* Psalm xxvi. 2, 3.

There is much forgery in the world, neither is there any virtue under heaven whereof there are not many counterfeits. Hypocrisy makes a more glorious show than the truest piety; and many a real saint is branded with simulation.

The most wise God knows how to discover the true state of all hearts by affliction. Every face thus appears in its own hue; and then no marvel if the sincere and upright soul rejoice to have her truth and innocence gloriously vindicated, and made conspicuous to all eyes: *That the trial of* her *faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by the fire, may be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ,* 1 Pet. i. 7.

Section VIII.

But the far more excellent and gracious drift of our afflictions is, the bettering of our souls.

He that could say, *Remember David and all his troubles,* could also say, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes,* Psalm cxix. 71.

Well therefore did the angel that spake to Daniel put these two together, telling him that those persecutions which should befall God's people should *try them,* and *purge them,* and *make them white,* Dan. xi. 35; according to that which the Lord speaks by his prophet Zechariah, *I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver and gold is refined: and they shall call upon my name, and I will hear them,* Zech. xiii. 9.

How justly then doth the apostle profess to glory in tribulation; as knowing *that tribulation worketh patience, and patience*

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experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed! Rom. v. 3, 4, 5.

O the sweet and happy fruit of affliction! Who would not welcome that pain of body which works health to the soul; that loss of goods or temporal estate that enriches the soul; that trouble and disquiet that brings a sweet peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost?

How many have we seen that, with Jeshurun, have *waxed fat, and kicked* against the Almighty, in the pampered time of their prosperity, Deut. xxxii. 15; who, in the time of their trouble, have with broken hearts and bended knees sought their God, and found him to their unspeakable comfort! how many, that have been fast galloping towards hell in the lawless course of their wilful sins have, in the midst of their career, been stopped by the hand of a good God, through a sudden affliction!

O the indulgent strokes of a gracious God, that whips us here, *that we should not be condemned with the world!* 1 Cor. xi. 32. *Let the righteous* God *thus smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head*, Psalm cxli. 5.

SECTION IX.

According to the merciful intentions of the Almighty, thus healing and sovereign is affliction, in the very nature of it, to all God's dear ones upon earth, as being only a fatherly chastisement, not a severe punishment, wherever it falls. Even then, therefore, when he seems to frown upon them, he comes to them, not with a sword in his hand, but with a rod; not for his own revenge, but for their emendation.

The best of us is deeply sin-sick; this bitter potion is it that can only purge out all our peccant humours, and restore us to that good temper of spiritual health wherein we may comfortably enjoy God and ourselves. We all, as vessels of impure metal, through long security and disuse of holy duties, have contracted much rust; it is the gentle fire of seasonable affliction that must cleanse us, and make us fit for the service of our Maker: as he speaks of his peculiar people by the mouth of his prophet: *Behold I have refined thee; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction*, Isaiah xlviii. 10.

O that my soul could bless thee, my God, and adore thy justice and mercy in the differences of thy proceedings with the

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sons of men! For wicked men and presumptuous sinners thou hast reserved *the cup of trembling,* and *the dregs of the cup of* thy *fury,* Isa. li. 22; which they shall drink up, and die for ever: in the mean time they feast without fear, and let themselves loose to all jollity and pleasure, as having *made a league with death, and an agreement with hell*: whereas the failings of thy faithful but weak servants are smartingly rewarded with the lashes of painful afflictions here, and passed over with silence in the reckonings of eternity; while their humble penitence admits them to a gracious pardon in this world, and everlasting blessedness in the other.

Even so, Lord, let not *thy staff* only, but *thy rod* also *comfort me.* Let *thy loving correction make me,* however unworthy, *great* in thy favour; and let me bleed from that hand, which upholds me here, and shall crown me hereafter.

SECTION X.

It is easy enough to observe, that the main comfort of our sufferings must be expected from the issue: *for no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them which are thereby exercised,* Heb. xii. 11.

There is an end of all our sorrows; and that end is happy: such as makes more than abundant amends for all our sufferings: *Those that sow in tears shall reap in joy,* Ps. cxxvi. 5. *O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones,* Isa. liv. 11, 12. Indeed, *many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all,* Ps. xxxiv. 19: yea, delivereth him, not without triumph and infinite advantage; *Though they have lien among the pots, yet shall they be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold,* Ps. lxviii. 13.

It is not seldom seen, that God is pleased to recompense the sufferings of his servants with a sensible advancement in this present world. Job is double the richer for his losses: and Joseph changed the nasty rags of his prison for the fine linen of Egypt; and his gaol for a throne next to Pharaoh's.

But the full and unfailable perfection of their glorious amends

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abides for them in heaven: *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,* 2 Cor. iv. 17.

Lo, this, this is it, the assured expectation whereof is able to turn all the sorrows which the soul is capable of into joy. It was an heavenly word, which is said to have fallen from a mortified votary, whom Rome honours for a saint: "So great is the glory that I look for, as that all pain is a pleasure to me."

And, surely, could our narrow hearts apprehend it aright, so transcendent is the glory of this retribution, that we should not grudge at the condition, if we were allotted to pass through the torments of hell to so great a blessedness. How much more, therefore, should we, in intuition of this eternal happiness, lightly turn over those slight miseries which are incident into us in this our short pilgrimage upon earth.

Methinks I see with what courage and scorn, in this regard, that famous confessor, Marcus Arethusius, looked down upon his persecutors; when, being hanged up in a basket betwixt heaven and earth, his naked body all gashed with wounds, and anointed with honey to invite the wasps and hornets to that cruel banquet; he cheerfully insulted over the malicious spectators below, as poor terrene wretches, creeping upon the base earth; whereas himself was now advanced aloft towards that heaven whereto he was aspiring.

With what pity did the valiant martyrs behold their enraged tyrants and wearied tormentors, when they looked up to their heaven, and with the eyes of their faith saw that which the protomartyr saw with bodily eyes, the heavens opened, and their Jesus standing at the right hand of God ready to crown them with glory!

For us, we may not all be martyrs; but we must all be sufferers: for, *through many tribulations must we enter into the kingdom of God,* Acts xiv. 22; *and, if we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with him,* 2 Tim. ii. 12.

O poor tribulations, in respect to that kingdom! How can we be sensible of these flea-bitings, when we have a blessed eternity in our eye?

O God, bless thou mine eye with this sight, I shall not forbear to sing in the night of death itself, much less in the twilight of all these worldly afflictions.

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SECTION XI.

Come, then, all ye earthly crosses, and muster up all your forces against me. Here is that which is able to make me more than a conqueror over you all.

Have I lost my goods, and foregone a fair estate?—Had all the earth been mine, what is it to heaven? Had I been the lord of all the world, what was this to a kingdom of glory?

Have I parted with a dear consort, the sweet companion of my youth, the tender nurse of my age, the partner of my sorrows for these forty-eight years?—She is but stept a little before me to that happy rest which I am panting towards, and wherein I shall speedily overtake her. In the mean time, and ever, my soul is espoused to that glorious and immortal Husband, from whom it shall never be parted.

Am I bereaved of some of my dear children, the sweet pledges of our matrimonial love, whose heart and hopes promised me comfort in my declined age?—Why am I not rather thankful it hath pleased my God, out of my loins to furnish heaven with some happy guests? Why do I not, instead of mourning for their loss, sing praises to God for preferring them to that eternal blessedness?

Am I afflicted with bodily pain and sickness, which banisheth all sleep from my eyes, and exercises me with a lingering torture?—Ere long, this momentary distemper shall end in an everlasting rest.

Am I threatened by the sword of an enemy?—Suppose that man to be one of the guardians of paradise, and that sword as flaming as it is sharp, that one stroke should let me into that place of unconceivable pleasure, and admit me to feed on the tree of life for ever.

Cheer up, then, O my soul; and upon the fixed apprehension of the glory to be revealed, while thy weak partner, my body, droops and languishes under the sad load of years and infirmities, sing thou to thy God, even in the midnight of thy sorrows, and in the deepest darkness of death itself; songs of confidence, songs of spiritual joy, songs of praise and thanksgiving; saying, with all the glorified ones, *Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.* Rev. v. 13.

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THE FIRST CENTURY

OF

MEDITATIONS AND VOWS;

DIVINE AND MORAL.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

SIR ROBERT DRURY, KNIGHT;

ALL INCREASE OF TRUE HONOUR AND VIRTUE.

Sir,—That I have made these my homely aphorisms public needs no other reason, but that, though the world is furnished with other writings, even to satiety and surfeit, yet of those which reduce Christianity to practice there is at least scarce enough: wherein yet, I must needs confess, I had some eye to myself; for having after a sort vowed this austere course of judgment and practice to myself, I thought it best to acquaint the world with it, that it may either witness my answerable proceeding, or check me in my straying therefrom. By which means, so many men as I live amongst, so many monitors I shall have; which shall point me to my own rules, and upbraid me with my aberrations. Why I have dedicated them to your name cannot be strange to any that knows you my patron and me your pastor. The regard of which bond easily drew me on to consider, that whereas my body, which was ever weak, began of late to languish more, it would not be inexpedient, at the worst, to leave behind me this little monument of that great respect which I deservedly bear you. And if it shall please God to reprieve me until a longer day, yet it shall not repent me to have sent this unworthy scrawl, to wait upon you in your necessary absence: neither shall it be, I hope, bootless for you to adjoin these my mean speculations unto those grounds of virtue you have so happily laid; to which if they shall add but one scruple, it shall be to me sufficient joy, contentment, recompense.

From your Worship's humbly devoted,

JOS. HALL.

From your Hal-sted[a], Dec. 4.

[a] Now Hawstead.

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CENTURY I.

I.—In meditation, those which begin heavenly thoughts and prosecute them not, are like those which kindle a fire under green wood and leave it so soon as it but begins to flame; losing the hope of a good beginning for want of seconding it with a suitable proceeding. When I set myself to meditate, I will not give over till I come to an issue. It hath been said by some, that the beginning is as much as the midst; yea, more than all: but I say, the ending is more than the beginning.

II.—There is nothing but man that respecteth greatness: not God, not nature, not disease, not death, not judgment. Not God; he is no excepter of persons. Not nature; we see the sons of princes born as naked as the poorest; and the poor child as fair, well-favoured, strong, witty, as the heir of nobles. Not disease, death, judgment; they sicken alike, die alike, fare alike after death. There is nothing, besides natural men, of whom goodness is not respected. I will honour greatness in others; but for myself, I will esteem a dram of goodness worth a whole world of greatness.

III.—As there is a foolish wisdom, so there is a wise ignorance; in not prying into God's ark, not inquiring into things not revealed. I would fain know all that I need and all that I may; I leave God's secrets to himself. It is happy for me that God makes me of his court, though not of his counsel.

IV.—As there is no vacuity in nature, no more is there spiritually. Every vessel is full, if not of liquor, yet of air: so is the heart of man; though by nature it is empty of grace, yet it is full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Now, as it is filled with grace, so it is empty of his evil qualities; as in a vessel, so much water as goes in so much air goes out: but man's heart is a narrow-mouthed vessel, and receives grace but by drops, and therefore takes a long time to empty and fill. Now as there be differences in degrees, and one heart is nearer to fulness than another; so the best vessel is not quite full while it is in the body, because there are still remainders of corruption. I will neither be content with

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that measure of grace I have, nor impatient of God's delay; but every day I will endeavour to have one drop added to the rest; so my last day shall fill up my vessel to the brim.

V.—Satan would seem to be mannerly and reasonable; making as if he would be content with one half of the heart, whereas God challengeth all or none; as indeed He hath most reason to claim all, that made all. But this is nothing but a crafty fetch of Satan: for he knows, that if he have any part, God will have none: so the whole falleth to his share alone. My heart, when it is both whole and at the best, is but a strait and unworthy lodging for God. If it were bigger and better, I would reserve it all for him. Satan may look in at my doors by a temptation, but he shall not have so much as one chamber-room set apart for him to sojourn in.

VI.—I see that, in natural motions, the nearer any thing comes to his end, the swifter it moveth. I have seen great rivers, which, at their first rising out of some hill's side, might be covered with a bushel; which, after many miles, fill a very broad channel; and drawing near to the sea, do even make a little sea in their own banks: so the wind, at the first rising, as a little vapour from the crannies of the earth; and passing forward about the earth, the farther it goes the more blustering and violent it waxeth. A Christian's motion, after he is regenerate, is made natural to Godward; and therefore the nearer he comes to heaven the more zealous he is. A good man must not be like Hezekiah's sun, that went backward; nor like Joshua's sun, that stood still; but David's sun, that like a bridegroom comes out of his chamber, and as a champion rejoiceth to run his race: only herein is the difference, that when he comes to his high noon he declineth not. However therefore the mind in her natural faculties follows the temperature of the body, yet in these supernatural things she quite crosses it: for with the coldest complexion of age is joined, in those that are truly religious, the ferventest zeal and affection to good things; which is therefore the more reverenced and better acknowledged, because it cannot be ascribed to the hot spirits of youth. The devil himself devised that old slander of early holiness; "A young saint, an old devil." Sometimes young devils have proved old saints; never the contrary: but true saints in youth do always prove angels in their age. I will strive to be ever good; but if I should not find myself best at last, I should fear I was never good at all.

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VII.—Consent hearteneth sin, which a little dislike would have daunted at first. As we say, "There would be no thieves if no receivers;" so would there not be so many open mouths to detract and slander, if there were not as many open ears to entertain them. If I cannot stop another man's mouth from speaking ill, I will either open my mouth to reprove it, or else I will stop mine ears from hearing it; and let him see in my face that he hath no room in my heart.

VIII.— I have oft wondered how fishes can retain their fresh taste and yet live in salt waters, since I see that every other thing participates of the nature of the place wherein it abides; so the waters, passing through the channels of the earth, vary their savour with the veins of soil through which they slide: so brute creatures, transported from one region to another, alter their former quality, and degenerate by little and little. The like danger have I seen in the manners of men, conversing with evil companions in corrupt places: for besides that it blemisheth our reputation, and makes us thought ill though we be good, it breeds in us an insensible declination to ill, and works in us, if not an approbation, yet a less dislike of those sins to which our ears and eyes are so continually inured. I may have a bad acquaintance: I will never have a wicked companion.

IX.—Expectation, in a weak mind, makes an evil greater, and a good less: but, in a resolved mind, it digests an evil before it come; and makes a future good, long before, present. I will expect the worst, because it may come; the best, because I know it will come.

X.—Some promise what they cannot do, as Satan to Christ: some what they could, but mean not to do, as the sons of Jacob to the Shechemites: some what they meant for the time, and after retrait, as Laban to Jacob: some what they do also give, but unwillingly, as Herod: some what they willingly give and after repent them, as Joshua to the Gibeonites. So great distrust is there in man, whether from his impotence or faithlessness. As in other things, so in this, I see God is not like man: but in whatever he promises, he approves himself most faithful, both in his ability and performances. I will therefore ever trust God on his bare word; even with hope, besides hope, above hope, against hope; and onwards, I will rely on him for small matters of this life: for how shall I hope to trust him in impossibilities, if I may not in likelihoods? How shall I depend on him for raising my body from

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dust, and saving my soul, if I mistrust him for a crust of bread towards my preservation?

XI.—If the world would make me his minion, he could give me but what he hath: and what hath he to give but a smoke of honour, a shadow of riches, a sound of pleasures, a blast of fame; which when I have had in the best measure, I may be worse, I cannot be better? I can live no whit longer, no whit merrier, no whit happier. If he profess to hate me, what can he do but disgrace me in my name, impoverish me in my estate, afflict me in my body? in all which it is easy not to be ever the more miserable. I have been too long beguiled with the vain semblances of it: now henceforth, accounting myself born to a better world, I will, in a holy loftiness, bear myself as one too good to be enamoured of the best pleasures, to be daunted with the greatest miseries of this life.

XII.—I see there is no man so happy as to have all things, and no man so miserable as not to have some. Why should I look for a better condition than all others? If I have somewhat, and that of the best things, I will in thankfulness enjoy them, and want the rest with contentment.

XIII.—Constraint makes an easy thing toilsome; whereas, again, love makes the greatest toil pleasant. How many miles do we ride and run to see one silly beast follow another, with pleasure; which if we were commanded to measure upon the charge of a superior, we should complain of weariness! I see the folly of the most men, that make their lives miserable and their actions tedious for want of love to that they must do. I will first labour to settle in my heart a good affection to heavenly things: so, Lord, thy yoke shall be easy and thy burden light.

XIV.—I am a stranger even at home; therefore if the dogs of the world bark at me, I neither care nor wonder.

XV.—It is the greatest madness in the world, to be an hypocrite in religious profession. Men hate thee, because thou art a Christian, so much as in appearance: God hates thee double, because thou art but in appearance; so while thou hast the hatred of both, thou hast no comfort in thyself. Yet if thou wilt not be good, as thou seemest, I hold it better to seem ill, as thou art. An open wicked man doth much hurt with notorious sins; but an hypocrite doth at last more shame goodness by seeming good. I would rather be an open wicked man than an hypocrite; but I had rather be no man than either of them.

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XVI.—When I cast down mine eyes upon my wants, upon my sins, upon my miseries, methinks no man should be worse, no man so ill as I: my means so many, so forcible, and almost violent; my progress so small and insensible; my corruptions so strong; my infirmities so frequent and remediless; my body so unanswerable to my mind: but when I look up to the blessings that God hath enriched me withal, methinks I should soon be induced to think none more happy than myself: God is my friend and my father; the world, not my master, but my slave: I have friends, not many, but so tried, that I dare trust them; an estate, not superfluous, not needy, yet nearer to defect than abundance; a calling, if despised of men, yet honourable with God; a body, not so strong as to admit security, but often checking me in occasion of pleasure, nor yet so weak as to afflict me continually; a mind, not so furnished with knowledge that I may boast of it, nor yet so naked that I should despair of obtaining it: my miseries afford me joy; mine enemies, advantage: my account is cast up for another world. And if thou think I have said too much good of myself, either I am thus or I would be.

XVII.—The worldling's life is of all other most discomfortable: for that which is his God doth not alway favour him; that which should be, never.

XVIII.—There are three messengers of death; casualty, sickness, age. The two first are doubtful, since many have recovered them both; the last is certain. The two first are sudden; the last leisurely and deliberate. As for all men, upon so many summons, so especially for an old man, it is a shame to be unprepared for death: for where others see they may die, he sees he must die. I was long ago old enough to die; but if I live till age, I will think myself too old to live longer.

XIX.—I will not care what I have, whether much or little. If little, my account shall be the less; if more, I shall do the more good and receive the more glory.

XX.—I care not for any companion, but such as may teach me somewhat or learn somewhat of me. Both these shall much pleasure me; one as an agent, the other as a subject to work upon: neither know I whether more; for though it be an excellent thing to learn, yet I learn but to teach others.

XXI.—If earth, that is provided for mortality, and is possessed by the Maker's enemies, have so much pleasure in it, that worldlings think it worth the account of their heaven; such a sun to

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enlighten it, such a heaven to wall it about, such sweet fruits and flowers to adorn it, such variety of creatures for the commodious use of it; what must heaven needs be, that is provided for God himself and his friends? How can it be less in worth than God is above his creatures, and God's friends better than his enemies? I will not only be content, but desirous to be dissolved.

XXII.—It is commonly seen, that boldness puts men forth before their time, before their ability. Wherein we have seen many, that, like lapwings and partridges, have run away with some part of their shell on their heads: whence it follows, that as they began boldly, so they proceed unprofitably, and conclude not without shame. I had rather be haled by force of others to great duties, than rush upon them unbidden. It were better a man should want work, than that great works should want a man answerable to their weight.

XXIII.—I will use my friends as Moses did his rod: while it was a rod, he held it familiarly in his hand; when once a serpent, he ran away from it.

XXIV.—I have seldom seen much ostentation and much learning met together. The sun, rising and declining, makes long shadows; at midday, when he is at highest, none at all. Besides that, skill, when it is too much shown, loseth the grace: as fresh coloured wares, if they be often opened, lose their brightness, and are soiled with much handling. I had rather applaud myself for having much that I show not, than that others should applaud me for showing more than I have.

XXV.—An ambitious man is the greatest enemy to himself of any in the world besides: for he still torments himself with hopes and desires and cares; which he might avoid if he would remit of the height of his thoughts, and live quietly. My only ambition shall be, to rest in God's favour on earth, and to be a saint in heaven.

XXVI.—There was never good thing easily come by. The heathen man could say, "God sells knowledge for sweat;" and so he doth honour for jeopardy. Never any man hath got either wealth or learning with ease. Therefore the greatest good must needs be most difficult. How shall I hope to get Christ if I take no pains for him? And if, in all other things, the difficulty of obtaining whets the mind so much the more to seek, why should it in this alone daunt me? I will not care what I do, what I suffer, so I may win Christ. If men can endure such cutting, such lancing,

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and searing of their bodies, to protract a miserable life yet a while longer, what pain should I refuse for eternity?

XXVII.—If I die, the world shall miss me but a little, I shall miss it less. Not it me; because it hath such store of better men: not I it; because it hath so much ill, and I shall have so much happiness.

XXVIII.—Two things make a man set by; dignity and desert. Amongst fools, the first without the second is sufficient: amongst wise men, the second without the first. Let me deserve well, though I be not advanced. The conscience of my worth shall cheer me more in others' contempt, than the approbation of others can comfort me against the secret check of my own unworthiness.

XXIX.—The best qualities do so cleave to their subjects that they cannot be communicated to others: for whereas patrimony and vulgar account of honour follow the blood in many generations, virtue is not traduced in propagation, nor learning bequeathed by our will to our heirs; lest the givers should wax proud, and the receivers negligent. I will account nothing my own but what I have gotten; nor that my own, because it is more of gift than desert.

XXX.—Then only is the Church most happy, when truth and peace kiss each other; and then miserable, when either of them balk the way, or when they meet and kiss not: for truth without peace is turbulent, and peace without truth is secure injustice. Though I love peace well, yet I love main truths better; and though I love all truths well, yet I had rather conceal a small truth than disturb a common peace.

XXXI.—An indiscreet good action is little better than a discreet mischief. For in this, the doer wrongs only the patient; but in that other, the wrong is done to the good action; for both it makes a good thing odious, (as many good tales are marred in telling,) and besides, it prejudices a future opportunity. I will rather let pass a good gale of wind and stay on the shore, than launch forth when I know the wind will be contrary.

XXXII.—The world teacheth me, that it is madness to leave behind me those goods that I may carry with me: Christianity teacheth me, that what I charitably give alive, I carry with me dead: and experience teacheth me, that what I leave behind I lose. I will carry that treasure with me by giving it, which the worldling loseth by keeping it: so while his corpse shall carry

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nothing but a winding cloth to his grave, I shall be richer under the earth than I was above it.

XXXIII.—Every worldling is an hypocrite; for while his face naturally looks upward to heaven, his heart grovels beneath on the earth; yet if I would admit of any discord in the inward and outward parts, I would have an heart that should look up to heaven in an holy contemplation of the things above, and a countenance cast down to the earth in humiliation. This only dissimilitude is pleasing to God.

XXXIV.—The heart of man is a short word, a small substance, scarce enough to give a kite one meal, yet great in capacity; yea, so infinite in desire, that the round globe of the world cannot fill the three corners of it. When it desires more, and cries, "Give, give," I will set it over to that Infinite Good, where, the more it hath, it may desire more, and see more to be desired. When it desires but what it needeth, my hands shall soon satisfy it; for if either of them may contain it when it is without the body, much more may both of them fill it while it is within.

XXXV.—With men it is a good rule, to try first, and then to trust: with God it is contrary. I will first trust him, as most wise, omnipotent, merciful, and try him afterwards. I know it is as impossible for him to deceive me, as not to be.

XXXVI.—As Christ was both a lamb and a lion, so is every Christian: a lamb, for patience in suffering and innocence of life; a lion, for boldness in his innocency. I would so order my courage and mildness, that I may be neither lion-like in my conversation, nor sheepish in the defence of a good cause.

XXXVII.—The godly sow in tears and reap in joy. The seed-time is commonly waterish and lowering. I will be content with a wet spring, so I may be sure of a clear and joyful harvest.

XXXVIII.—Every man hath an heaven and an hell. Earth is the wicked man's heaven; his hell is to come: on the contrary, the godly have their hell upon earth, where they are vexed with temptations and afflictions, by Satan and his complices; their heaven is above, in endless happiness. If it be ill with me on earth, it is well my torment is so short and so easy: I will not be so covetous, to hope for two heavens.

XXXIX.—Man, on his deathbed, hath a double prospect; which, in his lifetime, the interposition of pleasure and miseries debarred him from. The good man looks upward, and sees heaven open, with Stephen, and the glorious angels ready to carry up his

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soul: the wicked man looks downward, and sees three terrible spectacles; death, judgment, hell, one beyond another; and all to be passed through by his soul. I marvel not that the godly have been so cheerful in death, that those torments, whose very sight hath overcome the beholders, have seemed easy to them. I marvel not that a wicked man is so loath to hear of death; so dejected when he feeleth sickness; and so desperate when he feeleth the pangs of death: nor that every Balaam would fain die the death of the righteous. Henceforth, I will envy none but a good man: I will pity nothing so much as the prosperity of the wicked.

XL.—Not to be afflicted is a sign of weakness: for therefore God imposeth no more on me, because he sees I can bear no more. God will not make choice of a weak champion. When I am stronger, I will look for more; and when I sustain more, it shall more comfort me that God finds me strong, than it shall grieve me to be pressed with an heavy affliction.

XLI.—That the wicked have peace in themselves is no wonder; they are as sure as temptation can make them. No prince makes war with his own subjects. The godly are still enemies; therefore they must look to be assaulted both by stratagems and violence. Nothing shall more joy me than my inward unquietness. A just war is a thousand times more happy than an ill-conditioned peace.

XLII.— Goodness is so powerful, that it can make things simply evil (namely, our sins) good to us: not good in nature, but good in the event; good when they are done, not good to be done. Sin is so powerful, that it can turn the holiest ordinances of God into itself. But herein our sin goes beyond our goodness; that sin defiles a man or action otherwise good, but all the goodness of the world cannot justify one sin: as the holy flesh in the skirt makes not the bread holy that toucheth it; but the unclean, touching a holy thing, defileth it. I will loathe every evil for its own sake: I will do good, but not trust to it.

XLIII.—Fools measure good actions by the event after they are done: wise men beforehand, by judgment, upon the rules of reason and faith. Let me do well; let God take charge of the success. If it be well accepted, it is well: if not, my thank is with God.

XLIV.—He was never good man that amends not: for if he were good, he must needs desire to be better. Grace is so sweet,

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that whoever tastes of it must needs long after more: and if he desire it, he will endeavour it; and if he do but endeavour, God will crown it with success. God's family admitteth of no dwarfs, which are unthriving, and stand at a stay; but men of measures. Whatever become of my body or my estate, I will ever labour to find somewhat added to the stature of my soul.

XLV.—Pride is the most dangerous of all sins; for both it is most insinuative, having crept into heaven and paradise, and most dangerous where it is: for, where all other temptations are about evil, this alone is conversant only about good things; and one dram of it poisons many measures of grace. I will not be more afraid of doing good things amiss than of being proud when I have well performed them.

XLVI.—Not only commission makes a sin. A man is guilty of all those sins he hateth not. If I cannot avoid all, yet I will hate all.

XLVII.—Prejudice is so great an enemy to truth, that it makes the mind incapable of it. In matters of faith, I will first lay a sure ground, and then believe, though I cannot argue; holding the conclusion in spite of the premises: but in other less matters, I will not so forestall my mind with resolution as that I will not be willing to be better informed: neither will I say in myself, "I will hold it, therefore it shall be truth;" but, "This is truth, therefore I will hold it." I will not strive for victory, but for truth.

XLVIII.—Drunkenness and covetousness do much resemble one another; for the more a man drinks the more he thirsteth, and the more he hath, still the more he coveteth. And for their effects, besides other, both of them have the power of transforming a man into a beast; and, of all other beasts, into a swine. The former is evident to sense; the other, though more obscure, is no more questionable. The covetous man in two things plainly resembleth a swine; that he ever roots in the earth, not so much as looking towards heaven; that he never doth good till his death. In desiring, my rule shall be, necessity of nature or estate; in having, I will account that my good which doeth me good.

XLIX.—I acknowledge no master of requests in heaven but one, Christ my Mediator. I know I cannot be so happy as not to need him, nor so miserable that he should contemn me. I will always ask, and that of none but where I am sure to speed; but where there is so much store, that when I have had the most I shall leave no less behind. Though numberless drops be in the

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sea, yet if one be taken out of it, it hath so much the less, though insensibly; but God, because he is infinite, can admit of no diminution. Therefore are men niggardly, because the more they give the less they have; but thou, Lord, mayest give what thou wilt without abatement of thy store. Good prayers never came weeping home; I am sure I shall receive either what I ask or what I should ask.

L.—I see that a fit booty many times makes a thief; and many would be proud if they had but the common causes of their neighbours. I account this none of the least favours of God, that the world goes no better forward with me; for I fear if my estate were better to the world it might be worse to God. As it is an happy necessity that enforceth to good, so is that next happy that hinders from evil.

LI.—It is the basest love of all others, that is for a benefit; for herein we love not another so much as ourselves. Though there were no heaven, O Lord, I would love thee: now there is one, I will esteem it, I will desire it; yet still I will love thee for thy goodness' sake. Thyself is reward enough, though thou broughtest no more.

LII.—I see men point the field, and desperately jeopard their lives, as prodigal of their blood, in the revenge of a disgraceful word against themselves; while they can be content to hear God pulled out of heaven with blasphemy, and not feel so much as a rising of their blood: which argues our cold love to God, and our over fervent affection to ourselves. In mine own wrongs, I will hold patience laudable; but in God's injuries, impious.

LIII.—It is an hard thing to speak well; but it is harder to be well silent, so as it may be free from suspicion of affectation or sullenness or ignorance; else loquacity, and not silence, would be a note of wisdom. Herein I will not care how little, but how well. He said well for this, "Not that which is much is well, but that which is well is much."

LIV.—There is nothing more odious than fruitless old age. Now for that no tree bears fruit in autumn unless it blossom in the spring, to the end that my age may be profitable, and laden with ripe fruit, I will endeavour that my youth may be studious, and flowered with the blossoms of learning and observation.

LV.—Revenge commonly hurts both the offerer and sufferer; as we see in the foolish bee, (though in all other things commendable, yet herein the pattern of fond spitefulness,) which in her

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anger envenometh the flesh, and loseth her sting, and so lives a drone ever after. I account it the only valour to remit a wrong, and will applaud it to myself, as right noble and Christian, that I might hurt and will not.

LVI.—He that lives well cannot choose but die well: for if he die suddenly, yet he dies not unpreparedly; if by leisure, the conscience of his well-led life makes his death more comfortable. But it is seldom seen that he which liveth ill dieth well; for the conscience of his former evils, his present pain, and the expectation and fear of greater so take up his heart, that he cannot seek God. And now it is just with God not to be sought, or not to be found; because he sought to him in his lifetime, and was repulsed. Whereas therefore there are usually two main cares of good men, to live well and die well, I will have but this one, to live well.

LVII.—With God there is no free man but his servant, though in the galleys; no slave but the sinner, though in a palace; none noble but the virtuous, if never so basely descended; none rich but he that possesseth God, even in rags; none wise but he that is a fool to himself and the world; none happy but he whom the world pities. Let me be free, noble, rich, wise, happy to God; I pass not what I am to the world.

LVIII.—When the mouth praiseth, man heareth; when the heart, God heareth. Every good prayer knocketh at heaven for a blessing; but an importunate prayer pierceth it, though as hard as brass, and makes way for itself into the ears of the Almighty. And as it ascends lightly up, carried with the wings of faith, so it comes ever laden down again upon our heads. In my prayers my thoughts shall not be guided by my words, but my words shall follow my thoughts.

LIX.—If that servant were condemned for evil that gave God no more than his own, which he had received, what shall become of them that rob God of his own? If God gain a little glory by me, I shall gain more by him. I will labour so to husband the stock that God hath left in my hands, that I may return my soul better than I received it, and that he may take it better than I return it.

LX.—Heaven is compared to an hill; and therefore is figured by Olympus among the heathen, by mount Sion in God's book; hell, contrariwise, to a pit. The ascent to the one is hard therefore, and the descent of the other easy and headlong; and so as if we once begin to fall the recovery is most difficult, and not one

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of many stays till he comes to the bottom. I will be content to pant and blow and sweat in climbing up to heaven; as, contrarily, I will be wary of setting the first step downward towards the pit. For as there is a Jacob's ladder into heaven, so there are blind stairs that go winding down into death, whereof each makes way for other. From the object is raised an ill suggestion: suggestion draws on delight; delight, consent; consent, endeavour; endeavour, practice; practice, custom; custom, excuse; excuse, defence; defence, obstinacy; obstinacy, boasting of sin; boasting, a reprobate sense. I will watch over my ways; and do thou, Lord, watch over me, that I may avoid the first degrees of sin. And if those overtake my frailty, yet keep me, that presumptuous sins prevail not over me. Beginnings are with more ease and safety declined when we are free, than proceedings when we have begun.

LXI.—It is fitter for youth to learn than teach, and for age to teach than learn; and yet fitter for an old man to learn than to be ignorant. I know I shall never know so much that I cannot learn more, and I hope I shall never live so long as till I be too old to learn.

LXII.—I never loved those salamanders that are never well but when they are in the fire of contention. I will rather suffer a thousand wrongs than offer one; I will suffer an hundred rather than return one; I will suffer many ere I will complain of one, and endeavour to right it by contending. I have ever found that to strive with my superior is furious; with my equal, doubtful; with my inferior, sordid and base; with any, full of unquietness.

LXIII.—The praise of a good speech standeth in words and matter: matter, which is as a fair and well-featured body; elegance of words, which is as a neat and well-fashioned garment. Good matter, slubbered up in rude and careless words, is made loathsome to the hearer; as a good body, misshapen with unhandsome clothes. Elegancy without soundness is no better than a nice vanity. Although, therefore, the most hearers are like bees, that go all to the flowers; never regarding the good herbs, that are of as wholesome use as the other of fair show; yet let my speech strive to be profitable; plausible, as it happens. Better the coat be misshapen than the body.

LXIV.—I see that, as black and white colours to the eyes, so is the vice and virtue of others to the judgment of men. Vice gathers the beams of the sight in one; that the eye may see it,

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and be intent upon it: virtue scatters them abroad; and therefore hardly admits of a perfect apprehension. Whence it comes to pass, that, as judgment is according to sense, we do so soon espy, and so earnestly censure a man for one vice; letting pass many laudable qualities undiscerned, or at least unacknowledged. Yea, whereas every man is once a fool, and doeth that perhaps in one fit of his folly which he shall at leisure repent of, (as Noah, in one hour's drunkenness, uncovered those secrets which were hid six hundred years before,) the world is hereupon ready to call in question all his former integrity, and to exclude him from the hope of any future amendment. Since God hath given me two eyes, the one shall be busied about the present fault that I see, with a detesting commiseration; the other, about the commendable qualities of the offender, not without an unpartial approbation of them. So shall I do God no wrong in robbing him of the glory of his gifts mixed with infirmities; nor yet in the meantime encourage vice, while I do distinctly reserve for it a due portion of hatred.

LXV.—God is above man; the brute creatures under him; he set in the midst. Lest he should be proud that he had infinite creatures under him, that One is infinite degrees above him. I do therefore owe awe unto God, mercy to the inferior creatures; knowing that they are my fellows in respect of creation, whereas there is no proportion betwixt me and my Maker.

LXVI.—One said, "It is good to inure thy mouth to speak well; for good speech is many times drawn into the affection:" but I would fear, that speaking well without feeling were the next way to procure an habitual hypocrisy. Let my good words follow good affections, not go before them. I will therefore speak as I think: but withal, I will labour to think well, and then I know I cannot but speak well.

LXVII.—When I consider my soul, I could be proud to think of how divine a nature and quality it is; but when I cast down mine eyes to my body, as the swan to her black legs, and see what loathsome matter issues from the mouth, nostrils, ears, pores, and other passages, and how most carrion-like of all other creatures it is after death; I am justly ashamed to think that so excellent a guest dwells but in a more cleanly dunghill.

LXVIII.—Every worldling is a madman: for besides that he preferreth profit and pleasure to virtue, the world to God, earth to heaven, time to eternity; he pampers the body and starves the

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soul. He feeds one fowl a hundred times, that it may feed him but once; and seeks all lands and seas for dainties, not caring whether any or what repast he provideth for his soul. He clothes the body with all rich ornaments, that it may be as fair without as it is filthy within; whilst his soul goes bare and naked, having not a rag of knowledge to cover it. Yea, he cares not to destroy his soul, to please the body; when, for the salvation of the soul, he will not so much as hold the body short of the least pleasure. What is, if this be not, a reasonable kind of madness? Let me enjoy my soul no longer than I prefer it to my body. Let me have a deformed, lean, crooked, unhealthful, neglected body, so that I may find my soul sound, strong, well furnished, well disposed both for earth and heaven.

LXIX.—Asa was sick but of his feet, far from the heart; yet because he sought to the physicians, not to God, he escaped not. Hezekiah was sick to die; yet because he trusted to God, not to physicians, he was restored. Means, without God, cannot help; God, without means, can, and often doth. I will use good means, not rest in them.

LXX.—A man's best monument is his virtuous actions. Foolish is the hope of immortality and future praise by the cost of senseless stone; when the passenger shall only say, "Here lies a fair stone and a filthy carcass." That only can report thee rich; but for other praises, thyself must build thy monument, alive; and write thy own epitaph in honest and honourable actions; which are so much more noble than the other, as living men are better than dead stones. Nay, I know not if the other be not the way to work a perpetual succession of infamy; while the censorious reader, upon occasion thereof, shall comment upon thy bad life: whereas in this, every man's heart is a tomb, and every man's tongue writeth an epitaph upon the well behaved. Either I will procure me such a monument to be remembered by, or else it is better to be inglorious than infamous.

LXXI.—The basest things are ever most plentiful. History and experience tell us, that some kind of mouse breedeth one hundred and twenty young ones in one nest; whereas the lion or elephant beareth but one at once. I have ever found, the least wit yieldeth the most words. It is both the surest and wisest way to speak little and think more.

LXXII.—An evil man is clay to God, wax to the devil. God may stamp him into powder, or temper him anew, but none of his

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means can melt him. Contrariwise, a good man is God's wax and Satan's clay; he relents at every look of God, but is not stirred at any temptation. I had rather bow than break to God; but for Satan, or the world, I had rather be broken in pieces with their violence, than suffer myself to be bowed unto their obedience.

LXXIII.—It is an easy matter for a man to be careless of himself, and yet much easier to be enamoured of himself; for if he be a Christian, while he contemneth the world perfectly, it is hard for him to reserve a competent measure of love to himself: if a worldling, it is not possible but he must overlove himself. I will strive for the mean of both; and so hate the world, that I may care for myself; and so care for myself, that I be not in love with the world.

LXXIV.—I will hate popularity and ostentation; as ever dangerous, but most of all in God's business; which whoso affect, do as ill spokesmen, who when they are sent to woo for God, speak for themselves. I know how dangerous it is to have God my rival.

LXXV.—Earth affords no sound contentment; for what is there under heaven not troublesome, besides that which is called pleasure? and that in the end I find most irksome of all other. My soul shall ever look upward for joy, and downward for penitence.

LXXVI.—God is ever with me, ever before me. I know he cannot but oversee me always, though my eyes be held that I see him not; yea, he is still within me, though I feel him not: neither is there any moment that I can live without God. Why do I not therefore always live with him? Why do I not account all hours lost wherein I enjoy him not?

LXXVII.—There is no man so happy as the Christian. When he looks up unto heaven, he thinks, "That is my home; the God that made it and owns it is my Father; the angels, more glorious in nature than myself, are my attendants; mine enemies are my vassals." Yea, those things which are the terriblest of all to the wicked, are most pleasant to him. When he hears God thunder above his head, he thinks, "This is the voice of my Father." When he remembereth the tribunal of the last judgment, he thinks, "It is my Saviour that sits in it;" when death, he esteems it but as the angel set before paradise, which with one blow admits him

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to eternal joy. And which is most of all, nothing in earth or hell can make him miserable. There is nothing in the world worth envying, but a Christian.

LXXVIII.—As man is a little world, so every Christian is a little Church within himself. As the Church therefore is sometimes in the wane through persecution, other times in her full glory and brightness; so let me expect myself sometimes drooping under temptations, and sadly hanging down the head for the want of the feeling of God's presence, at other times carried with the full sail of a resolute assurance to heaven; knowing, that as it is a Church at the weakest stay, so shall I, in my greatest dejection, hold the child of God.

LXXIX.—Temptations on the right hand are more perilous than those on the left, and destroy a thousand to the others' ten; as the sun more usually causeth the traveller to cast off his cloak than the wind. For those on the left hand miscarry men but two ways; to distrust, and denial of God; more rare sins: but the other, to all the rest wherewith men's lives are so commonly defiled. The spirit of Christians is like the English jet, whereof we read, that it is fired with water, quenched with oil. And these two, prosperity and adversity, are like heat and cold; the one gathers the powers of the soul together, and makes them able to resist by uniting them; the other diffuses them, and by such separation makes them easier to conquer. I hold it therefore as praiseworthy with God, for a man to contemn a proffered honour or pleasure for conscience' sake; as, on the rack, not to deny his profession. When these are offered, I will not nibble at the bait, that I be not taken with the hook.

LXXX.—God is Lord of my body also; and therefore challengeth as well reverent gesture as inward devotion. I will ever in my prayers either stand as a servant before my Master, or kneel as a subject to my Prince.

LXXXI.—I have not been in others' breasts; but, for my own part, I never tasted of aught that might deserve the name of pleasure. And if I could, yet a thousand pleasures cannot countervail one torment; because the one may be exquisite, the other not without composition. And if not one torment, much less a thousand. And if not for a moment, much less for eternity. And if not the torment of a part, much less of the whole. For if the pain but of a tooth be so intolerable, what shall the racking of the

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whole body be? And if of the body, what shall that be which is primarily of the soul? If there be pleasures that I hear not of, I will be wary of buying them so over-dear.

LXXXII.—As hypocrisy is a common counterfeit of all virtues, so there is no special virtue which is not, to the very life of it, seemingly resembled by some special vice. So devotion is counterfeited by superstition, good thrift by niggardliness, charity with vainglorious pride. For as charity is bounteous to the poor, so is vainglory to the wealthy; as charity sustains all for truth, so pride for a vain praise: both of them make a man courteous and affable. So the substance of every virtue is in the heart: which, since it hath not a window made into it by the Creator of it, but is reserved under lock and key for his own view, I will judge only by appearance. I had rather wrong myself by credulity, than others by unjust censures and suspicions.

LXXXIII.—Every man hath a kingdom within himself. Reason, as the princess, dwells in the highest and inwardest room. The senses are the guard and attendants on the court, without whose aid nothing is admittted into the presence. The supreme faculties, as will, memory, &c., are the peers. The outward parts and inward affections are the commons. Violent passions are as rebels, to disturb the common peace. I would not be a Stoic, to have no passions; for that were to overthrow this inward government God hath erected in me; but a Christian, to order those I have. And for that I see, that as in commotions one mutinous person draws on more, so in passions, that one makes way for the extremity of another, (as excess of love causeth excess of grief, upon the loss of what we loved,) I will do as wise princes use to those they misdoubt for faction, so hold them down and keep them bare, that their very impotency and remissness shall afford me security.

LXXXIV.—I look upon the things of this life as an owner, as a stranger; as an owner in their right, as a stranger in their use. I see that owning is but a conceit, besides using: I can use, as I lawfully may, other men's commodities as my own; walk in their woods, look on their fair houses with as much pleasure as my own; yet again, I will use my own, as if it were another's; knowing that though I hold them by right, yet it is only by tenure at will.

LXXXV.—There is none like to Luther's three masters, prayer, temptation, meditation. Temptation stirs up holy medi-

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tation; meditation prepares to prayer; and prayer makes profit of temptation, and fetcheth all divine knowledge from heaven. Of others I may learn the theory of divinity, of these only the practice. Other masters teach me by rote to speak parrot-like of heavenly things; these alone with feeling and understanding.

LXXXVI.—Affectation is the greatest enemy both of doing well and good acceptance of what is done. I hold it the part of a wise man to endeavour rather that fame may follow him than go before him.

LXXXVII.—I see a number which, with Shimei, while they seek their servant, which is riches, lose their souls. No worldly thing shall draw me without the gates within which God hath confined me.

LXXXVIII.—It is an hard thing for a man to find weariness in pleasure while it lasteth, or contentment in pain while he is under it; after both, indeed, it is easy. Yet both of these must be found in both, or else we shall be drunken with pleasures and overwhelmed with sorrow. As those therefore which should eat some dish over deliciously sweet do allay it with tart sauce, that they may not be cloyed; and those that are to receive bitter pills, that they may not be annoyed with their unpleasing taste roll them in sugar; so in all pleasures it is best to labour, not how to make them most delightful, but how to moderate them from excess; and in all sorrows so to settle our hearts in true grounds of comfort, that we may not care so much for being bemoaned of others as how to be most contented in ourselves.

LXXXIX.—In ways, we see travellers choose not the fairest and greenest, if it be either cross or contrary; but the nearest, though miry and uneven; so in opinions, let me follow not the plausiblest, but the truest, though more perplexed.

XC.—Christian society is like a bundle of sticks laid together, whereof one kindles another. Solitary men have fewest provocations to evil; but, again, fewest incitations to good. So much as doing good is better than not doing evil, will I account Christian good fellowship better than an eremitish and melancholy solitariness.

XCI.—I had rather confess my ignorance than falsely profess knowledge. It is no shame not to know all things, but it is a just shame to overreach in any thing.

XCII.—Sudden extremity is a notable trial of faith, or any

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other disposition of the soul. For as in a sudden fear the blood gathers to the heart, for guarding of that part which is principal; so the powers of the soul combine themselves in an hard exigent, that they may be easily judged of. The faithful, more suddenly than any casualty, can lift up his heart to his stay in heaven; whereas the worldling stands amazed and distraught with the evil, because he hath no refuge to fly unto; for not being acquainted with God in his peace, how should he but have him to seek in his extremity? When therefore some sudden stitch girds me in the side, like to be the messenger of death, or when the sword of my enemy in an unexpected assault threatens my body, I will seriously note how I am affected; so the suddenest evil, as it shall not come unlooked for, shall not go away unthought of. If I find myself courageous and heavenly-minded, I will rejoice in the truth of God's grace in me, knowing that one dram of tried faith is worth a whole pound of speculative, and that which once stood by me will never fail me: if dejected and heartless, herein I will acknowledge cause of humiliation, and with all care and earnestness seek to store myself against the dangers following.

XCIII.—The rules of civil policy may well be applied to the mind. As therefore for a prince, that he may have good success against either rebels or foreign enemies, it is a sure axiom, "divide and rule;" but when he is one seated in the throne over loyal subjects, "unite and rule:" so in the regiment of the soul there must be variance set in the judgment and the conscience and affections, that that which is amiss may be subdued; but when all parts are brought to order, it is the only course to maintain their peace, that, all seeking to establish and help each other, the whole may prosper. Always to be at war is desperate, always at peace secure and over epicure like. I do account a secure peace a just occasion of this civil dissension in myself, and a true Christian peace the end of all my secret wars; which when I have achieved I shall reign with comfort, and never will be quiet till I have achieved it.

XCIV.—I brought sin enough with me into the world to repent of all my life, though I should never actually sin; and sin enough actually every day to sorrow for, though I had brought none with me into the world: but laying both together, my time is rather too short for my repentance. It were madness in me to spend my short life in jollity and pleasure, whereof I have so small occasion, and neglect the opportunity of my so just sorrow; espe-

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cially since before I came into the world I sinned, after I am gone out of the world, the contagion of my sin past shall add to the guilt of it; yet in both these states I am uncapable of repentance. I will do that while I may, which, when I have neglected, is unrecoverable.

XCV.—Ambition is torment enough for an enemy, for it affords as much discontentment in enjoying as in want, making men like poisoned rats; which, when they have tasted of their bane, cannot rest till they drink, and then can much less rest till their death. It is better for me to live in the wise men's stocks, in a contented want, than in a fool's paradise, to vex myself with wilful unquietness.

XCVI.—It is not possible but a conceited man must be a fool; for that overweening opinion he hath of himself excludes all opportunity of purchasing knowledge. Let a vessel be once full of never so base liquor it will not give room to the costliest, but spills beside whatsoever is infused. The proud man, though he be empty of good substance, yet is full of conceit. Many men had proved wise, if they had not so thought themselves. I am empty enough to receive knowledge enough. Let me think myself but so bare as I am, and more I need not. O Lord, do thou teach me how little, how nothing I have, and give me no more than I know I want.

XCVII.—Every man hath his turn of sorrow; whereby, some more some less, all men are in their times miserable. I never yet could meet with the man that complained not of somewhat. Before sorrow come, I will prepare for it; when it is come, I will welcome it; when it goes, I will take but half a farewell of it, as still expecting his return.

XCVIII.—There be three things that follow an injury, so far as it concerneth ourselves, (for as the offence toucheth God, it is above our reach,) revenge, censure, satisfaction; which must be remitted of the merciful man. Yet not all at all times: but revenge always, leaving it to him that can and will do it; censure, ofttimes; satisfaction, sometimes. He that deceives me oft, though I must forgive him, yet charity binds me not, not to censure him for untrusty: and he that hath endamaged me much cannot plead breach of charity in my seeking his restitution. I will so remit wrongs, as I may not encourage others to offer them; and so retain them, as I may not induce God to retain mine to him.

XCIX.—Garments that have once one rent in them are subject

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to be torn on every nail and every brier; and glasses that are once cracked are soon broken: such is a man's good name, once tainted with just reproach. Next to the approbation of God and the testimony of mine own conscience, I will seek for a good reputation with men: not by close carriage, concealing faults, that they may not be known to my shame; but avoiding all vices, that I may not deserve it. The efficacy of the agent is in the patient well disposed. It is hard for me ever to do good unless I be reputed good.

C.—Many vegetable and many brute creatures exceed man in length of age; which hath opened the mouths of heathen philosophers to accuse nature as a step-mother to man, who hath given him the least time to live, that only could make use of his time in getting knowledge. But herein religion doth most magnify God in his wisdom and justice; teaching us, that other creatures live long and perish to nothing: only man recompenses the shortness of his life with eternity after it; that the sooner he dies well, the sooner he comes to perfection of knowledge, which he might in vain seek below; the sooner he dies ill, the less hurt he doth with his knowledge. There is great reason then why man should live long; greater why he should die early. I will never blame God for making me too soon happy; for changing my ignorance for knowledge, my corruption for immortality, my infirmities for perfection: *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.*

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THE SECOND CENTURY

OF

MEDITATIONS AND VOWS;

DIVINE AND MORAL.

TO THE RIGHT VIRTUOUS AND WORSHIPFUL LADY,

THE LADY DRURY,

ALL INCREASE OF GRACE.

MADAM:—I know your Christian ingenuity such, that you will not grudge others the communication of this your private right: which yet I durst not have presumed to adventure, if I feared that either the benefit of it would be less, or the acceptation. Now it shall be no less yours: only it shall be more known to be yours. Vouchsafe therefore to take part with your worthy husband of these my simple Meditations. And if your long and gracious experience have written you a larger volume of wholesome laws, and better informed you by precepts fetched from your own feeling, than I can hope for by my bare speculation; yet, where these my not unlikely rules shall accord with yours, let your redoubled assent allow them, and they confirm it. I made them not for the eye, but for the heart: neither do I commend them to your reading, but your practice: wherein also it shall not be enough that you are a mere and ordinary agent, but that you be a pattern propounded unto others' imitation. So shall your virtuous and holy progress, besides your own peace and happiness, be my crown and rejoicing in the day of our common appearance.

Your Ladyship's humbly devoted,

Halsted, December 4. JOS. HALL.

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I.—A man under God's affliction is like a bird in a net, the more he striveth the more he is entangled. God's decree cannot be eluded with impatience. What I cannot avoid I will learn to bear.

II.—I find that all worldly things require a long labour in getting, and afford a short pleasure in enjoying them. I will not care much for what I have, nothing for what I have not.

III.—I see natural bodies forsake their own place and condition for the preservation of the whole; but of all other creatures, man; and of all other men, Christians have the least interest in themselves. I will live as given to others, lent only to myself.

IV.—That which is said of the elephant, that being guilty of his deformity he cannot abide to look on his own face in the water, but seeks for troubled and muddy channels, we see well moralized in men of evil conscience, who know their souls are so filthy that they dare not so much as view them; but shift off all checks of their former iniquity with vain excuses of good-fellowship. Whence it is that every small reprehension so galls them; because it calls the eye of the soul home to itself, and makes them see a glimpse of what they would not. So have I seen a foolish and timorous patient, which, knowing his wound very deep, would not endure the chirurgeon to search it: whereon what can ensue but a festering of the part, and a danger of the whole body? So I have seen many prodigal wasters run so far in books that they cannot abide to hear of reckoning. It hath been an old and true proverb, "Oft and even reckonings make long friends." I will oft sum up my estate with God, that I may know what I have to expect and answer for. Neither shall my score run on so long with God, that I shall not know my debts, or fear an audit, or despair of payment.

V.—I account this body nothing but a close prison to my soul, and the earth a larger prison to my body. I may not break prison till I be loosed by death; but I will leave it, not unwillingly, when I am loosed.

VI.—The common fears of the world are causeless, and ill-placed. No man fears to do ill; every man to suffer ill:

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wherein, if we consider it well, we shall find that we fear our best friends. For my part, I have learned more of God and myself, in one week's extremity, than all my whole life's prosperity had taught me afore. And in reason and common experience, prosperity usually makes us forget our death; adversity, on the other side, makes us neglect our life. Now if we measure both of these by their effects, forgetfulness of death makes us secure; neglect of this life makes us careful of a better. So much, therefore, as neglect of life is better than forgetfulness of death, and watchfulness better than security, so much more beneficial will I esteem adversity than prosperity.

VII.—Even grief itself is pleasant to the remembrance, when it is once past; as joy is, while it is present; I will not, therefore, in my conceit, make any so great difference betwixt joy and grief; since grief past is joyful, and long expectation of joy is grievous.

VIII.—Every sickness is a little death. I will be content to die oft, that I may die once well.

IX.—Ofttimes those things which have been sweet in opinion have proved bitter in experience. I will, therefore, ever suspend my resolute judgment until the trial and event: in the mean while, I will fear the worst, and hope the best.

X.—In all divine and moral good things, I would fain keep that I have, and get that I want. I do not more loathe all other covetousness than I affect this. In all these things alone I profess never to have enough. If I may increase them, therefore, either by labouring or begging or usury, I shall leave no means unattempted.

XI.—Some children are of that nature, that they are never well but while the rod is over them: such am I to God. Let him beat me, so he amend me: let him take all away from me, so he give me himself.

XII.—There must not be one uniform proceeding with all men, in reprehension; but that must vary, according to the disposition of the reproved. I have seen some men, as thorns, which, easily touched, hurt not; but if hard and unwarily, fetch blood of the hand: others, as nettles, which, if they be nicely handled, sting and prick; but if hard and roughly pressed, are pulled up without harm. Before I take any man in hand, I will know whether he be a thorn or a nettle.

XIII.—I will account no sin little, since there is not the least

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but works out the death of the soul. It is all one, whether I be drowned in the ebber shore or in the midst of the deep sea.

XIV.—It is a base thing to get goods to keep them. I see that God, which only is infinitely rich, holdeth nothing in his own hands, but gives all to his creatures. But if we will needs lay up, where should we rather repose it than in Christ's treasury? The poor man's hand is the treasury of Christ. All my superfluity shall be there hoarded up, where I know it shall be safely kept, and surely returned me.

XV.—The school of God and nature require two contrary manners of proceeding. In the school of nature, we must conceive, and then believe; in the school of God, we must first believe, and then we shall conceive. He that believes no more than he conceives can never be a Christian, nor he a philosopher that assents without reason. In nature's school, we are taught to bolt out the truth by logical discourse: God cannot endure a logician. In his school, he is the best scholar that reasons least and assents most. In divine things, what I may I will conceive: the rest I will believe and admire. Not a curious head, but a credulous and plain heart, is accepted with God.

XVI.—No worldly pleasure hath any absolute delight in it; but, as a bee, having honey in the mouth, hath a sting in the tail. Why am I so foolish to rest my heart upon any of them; and not rather labour to aspire to that one absolute Good, in whom is nothing savouring of grief, nothing wanting to perfect happiness?

XVII.—A sharp reproof I account better than a smooth deceit. Therefore, when my friend checks me, I will respect it with thankfulness: when others flatter me, I will suspect it, and rest in my own censure of myself, who should be more privy and less partial to my own deservings.

XVIII.—Extremity distinguisheth friends. Worldly pleasures, like physicians, give us over when once we lie a dying; and yet the death-bed had most need of comforts: Christ Jesus standeth by his in the pangs of death, and after death at the bar of judgment, not leaving them either in their bed or grave. I will use them, therefore, to my best advantage, not trust them. But for thee, O my Lord, which in mercy and truth canst not fail me, whom I have found ever faithful and present in all extremities, kill me, yet will I trust in thee!

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XIX.—We have heard of so many thousand generations passed, and we have seen so many hundreds die within our knowledge, that I wonder any man can make account to live one day. I will die daily. It is not done before the time which may be done at all times.

XX.—Desire ofttimes makes us unthankful; for whoso hopes for that he hath not, usually forgets that which he hath. I will not suffer my heart to rove after high or impossible hopes, lest I should in the mean time contemn present benefits.

XXI.—In hoping well, in being ill, and fearing worse, the life of man is wholly consumed. When I am ill, I will live in hope of better; when well, in fear of worse: neither will I at any time hope without fear, lest I should deceive myself with too much confidence; wherein evil shall be so much more unwelcome and intolerable, because I looked for good: nor, again, fear without hope, lest I should be overmuch dejected: nor do either of them without true contentation.

XXII.—What is man to the whole earth? what is earth to the heaven? what is heaven to his Maker? I will admire nothing in itself, but all things in God, and God in all things.

XXIII.—There be three usual causes of ingratitude upon a benefit received; envy, pride, covetousness: envy, looking more at others' benefits than our own; pride, looking more at ourselves than the benefit; covetousness, looking more at what we would have than what we have. In good turns, I will neither respect the giver, nor myself, nor the gift, nor others, but only the intent and good-will from whence it proceeded. So shall I requite others' great pleasures with equal good-will, and accept of small favours with great thankfulness.

XXIV.—Whereas the custom of the world is to hate things present, to desire future, and magnify what is past; I will, contrarily, esteem that which is present best; for both what is past was once present, and what is future will be present: future things next, because they are present in hope: what is past least of all, because it cannot be present; yet somewhat, because it was.

XXV.—We pity the folly of the lark, which, while it playeth with the feather and stoopeth to the glass, is caught in the fowler's net, and yet cannot see ourselves alike made fools by Satan, who, deluding us by the vain feathers and glasses of the world, suddenly enwrappeth us in his snares. We see not the

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nets, indeed: it is too much that we shall feel them, and that they are not so easily escaped after as before avoided. *O Lord, keep thou mine eyes from beholding vanity.* And though mine eyes see it, let not my heart stoop to it, but loathe it afar off. And if I stoop at any time and be taken, set thou my soul at liberty, that I may say, *My soul is escaped, even as a bird out of the snare of the fowler: the snare is broken, and I am delivered.*

XXVI.—In suffering evil, to look to secondary causes, without respect to the highest, maketh impatience; for so we bite at the stone, and neglect him that threw it. If we take a blow at our equal, we return it with usury; if of a prince, we repine not. What matter is it, if God kill me, whether he do it by an ague or by the hand of a tyrant? Again, in expectation of good, to look to the first cause, without care of the second, argues idleness, and causeth want. As we cannot help ourselves without God, so God will not ordinarily help us without ourselves. In both I will look up to God, without repining at the means in one, or trusting them in the other.

XXVII.—If my money were another man's, I could but keep it; only the expending shows it my own. It is greater glory, comfort, and gain, to lay it out well than to keep it safely. God hath made me not his treasurer but his steward.

XXVIII.—Augustin's friend, Nebridius, not unjustly hated a short answer to a weighty and difficult question; because the disquisition of great truths requires time, and the determining is perilous. I will as much hate a tedious and far-fetched answer to a short and easy question. For as that other wrongs the truth, so this the hearer.

XXIX.—Performance is a binder. I will request no more favour of any man than I must needs. I will rather choose to make an honest shift than overmuch enthral myself by being beholding.

XXX.—The world is a stage; every man an actor, and plays his part here either in a comedy or tragedy. The good man is a comedian, which, however he begins, ends merrily; but the wicked man acts a tragedy, and therefore ever ends in horror. Thou seest a wicked man vaunt himself on this stage; stay till the last act, and look to his end, as David did, and see whether that be peace. Thou wouldest make strange tragedies, if thou wouldest have but one act. Who sees an ox, grazing in a fat

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and rank pasture, and thinks not that he is near to the slaughter? whereas the lean beast, that toils under the yoke, is far enough from the shambles. The best wicked man cannot be so envied in his first shows as he is pitiable in the conclusion.

XXXI.—Of all objects of beneficence, I will choose either an old man or a child, because these are most out of hope to requite. The one forgets a good turn, the other lives not to repay it.

XXXII.—That which Pythagoras said of philosophers is more true of Christians; for Christianity is nothing but a divine and better philosophy: three sorts of men come to the market, buyers, sellers, lookers-on. The two first are both busy, and carefully distracted about their market; only the third live happily, using the world as if they used it not.

XXXIII.—There be three things which of all other I will never strive for; the wall, the way, the best seat. If I deserve well, a low place cannot disparage me so much as I shall grace it: if not, the height of my place shall add to my shame; while every man shall condemn me of pride, matched with unworthiness.

XXXIV.—I see there is not so much difference betwixt a man and a beast, as betwixt a Christian and a natural man. For whereas man lives but one life of reason above the beast, a Christian lives four lives above a natural man; the life of inchoate regeneration by grace, the perfect life of imputed righteousness, the life of glory begun in the separation of the soul, the life of perfect glory in the society of the body with the soul in full happiness; the worst whereof is better by many degrees than the best life of a natural man. For whereas the dignity of the life is measured by the cause of it, (in which regard the life of the plant is basest, because it is but from the juice arising from the root, administered by the earth; the life of the brute creature better than it, because it is sensitive; of a man better than it, because reasonable,) and the cause of this life is the Spirit of God: so far as the Spirit of God is above reason, so far doth a Christian exceed a mere naturalist. I thank God much that he hath made me a man, but more that he hath made me a Christian; without which, I know not whether it had been better for me to have been a beast, or not to have been.

XXXV.—Great men's favours, friends' promises, and dead men's shoes, I will esteem, but not trust to.

XXXVI.—It is a fearful thing to sin, more fearful to delight in sin, yet worse to defend it; but worse than worst to boast of it.

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If therefore I cannot avoid sin, because I am a man; yet I will avoid the delight, defence, and boasting of sin, because I am a Christian.

XXXVII.—Those things which are most eagerly desired are most hardly both gotten and kept, God commonly crossing our desires in what we are over-fervent. I will therefore account all things as too good to have, so nothing too dear to lose.

XXXVIII.—A true friend is not born every day. It is best to be courteous to all, entire with few; so may we perhaps have less cause of joy; I am sure, less occasion of sorrow.

XXXIX.—Secrecies, as they are a burden to the mind ere they be uttered, so are they no less charge to the receiver when they are uttered. I will not long after more inward secrets, lest I should procure doubt to myself and jealous fear to the discloser; but as my mouth shall be shut with fidelity not to blab them, so my ear shall not be too open to receive them.

XL.—As good physicians by one receipt make way for another, so it is the safest course in practice: I will reveal a great secret to none but whom I have found faithful in less.

XLI.—I will enjoy all things in God, and God in all things; nothing in itself: so shall my joys neither change nor perish. For however the things themselves may alter or fade; yet he, in whom they are mine, is ever like himself, constant and everlasting.

XLII.—If I would provoke myself to contentation, I will cast down my eyes to my inferiors, and there see better men in worse condition; if to humility, I will cast them up to my betters; and so much more deject myself to them, by how much more I see them thought worthy to be respected of others, and deserve better in themselves.

XLIII.—True virtue rests in the conscience of itself, either for reward or censure. If therefore I know myself upright, false rumours shall not daunt me; if not answerable to the good report of my favourers, I will myself find the first fault, that I may prevent the shame of others.

XLIV.—I will account virtue the best riches, knowledge the next, riches the worst; and therefore will labour to be virtuous and learned without condition: as for riches, if they fall in my way, I refuse them not; but if not, I desire them not.

XLV.—An honest word I account better than a careless oath. I will say nothing but what I dare swear and will perform. It is

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a shame for a Christian to abide his tongue a false servant, or his mind a loose mistress.

XLVI.—There is a just and easy difference to be put betwixt a friend and an enemy, betwixt a familiar and a friend; and much good use to be made of all, but of all with discretion. I will disclose myself no whit to my enemy, somewhat to my friend, wholly to no man; lest I should be more others' than mine own. Friendship is brittle stuff. How know I, whether he that now loves me may not hate me hereafter?

XLVII.—No man but is an easy judge of his own matters; and lookers-on oftentimes see the more. I will therefore submit myself to others in what I am reproved, but in what I am praised only to myself.

XLVIII.—I will not be so merry as to forget God, nor so sorrowful as to forget myself.

XLIX.—As nothing makes so strong and mortal hostility as discord in religions, so nothing in the world unites men's hearts so firmly as the bond of faith. For, whereas there are three grounds of friendship—virtue, pleasure, profit; and by all confessions that is the surest which is upon virtue: it must needs follow, that what is grounded on the best and most heavenly virtue must be the fastest; which, as it unites man to God so inseparably, that no temptations, no torments, not all the gates of hell, can sever him; so it unites one Christian soul to another so firmly, that no outward occurrences, no imperfections in the party loved, can dissolve them. If I love not the child of God for his own sake, for his Father's sake, more than my friend for my commodity, or my kinsman for blood, I never received any spark of true heavenly love.

L.—The good duty that is deferred upon a conceit of present unfitness, at last grows irksome, and thereupon altogether neglected. I will not suffer my heart to entertain the least thought of loathness towards the task of devotion, wherewith I have stinted myself; but violently break through any motion of unwillingness, not without a deep check to myself for my backwardness.

LI.—Hearing is a sense of great apprehension, yet far more subject to deceit than seeing; not in the manner of apprehending, but in the uncertainty of the object. Words are vocal interpreters of the mind, actions real; and therefore, however both should speak according to the truth of what is in the heart, yet words do

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more belie the heart than actions. I care not what words I hear when I see deeds. I am sure what a man doth he thinketh, not so always what he speaketh. Though I will not be so severe a censor, that for some few evil acts I should condemn a man of false heartedness; yet, in common course of life, I need not be so mopish, as not to believe rather the language of the hand than of the tongue. He that says well and doth well, is without exception commendable; but if one of these must be severed from the other, I like him well that doth well and saith nothing.

LII.—That which they say of the pelican, that when the shepherds, in desire to catch her, lay fire not far from her nest, which she finding, and fearing the danger of her young, seeks to blow out with her wings so long till she burn herself, and makes herself a prey in an unwise pity to her young; I see morally verified in experience of those, which indiscreetly meddling with the flame of dissension kindled in the Church, rather increase than quench it; rather fire their own wings than help others. I had rather bewail the fire afar off than stir in the coals of it. I would not grudge my ashes to it if those might abate the burning; but since I see it is daily increased with partaking, I will behold it with sorrow, and meddle no otherwise than by prayers to God and entreaties to men; seeking my own safety and the peace of the Church in the freedom of my thought and silence of my tongue.

LIII.—That which is said of Lucilla's faction, that anger bred it, pride fostered it, and covetousness confirmed it, is true of all schisms, though with some inversion. For the most are bred through pride; while men, upon an high conceit of themselves, scorn to go in the common road, and affect singularity in opinion; are confirmed through anger, while they stomach and grudge any contradiction; and are nourished through covetousness, while they seek ability to bear out their part. In some others, again, covetousness obtains the first place, anger the second, pride the last. Herein therefore I have been always wont to commend and admire the humility of those great and profound wits whom depth of knowledge hath not led to by-paths in judgment; but walking in the beaten path of the Church, have bent all their forces to the establishment of received truths; accounting it greater glory to confirm an ancient verity, than to devise a new opinion, though never so profitable, unknown to their predecessors. I will not reject a truth for mere novelty; old truths may come newly to

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light; neither is God tied to times for the gift of his illumination: but I will suspect a novel opinion of untruth, and not entertain it, unless it may be deduced from ancient grounds.

LIV.—The ear and the eye are the mind's receivers, but the tongue is only busied in expending the treasure received. If therefore the revenues of the mind be uttered as fast or faster than they are received, it cannot be but that the mind must needs be held bare, and can never lay up for purchase; but if the receivers take in still with no utterance, the mind may soon grow a burden to itself and unprofitable to others. I will not lay up too much and utter nothing, lest I be covetous; nor spend much, and store up little, lest I be prodigal and poor.

LV.—It is a vainglorious flattery for a man to praise himself, an envious wrong to detract from others: I will speak no ill of others, no good of myself.

LVI.—That which is the misery of travellers, to find many hosts and few friends, is the estate of Christians in their pilgrimage to a better life. Good friends may not therefore be easily foregone; neither must they be used as suits of apparel, which when we have worn threadbare, we cast off, and call for new. Nothing but death or villany shall divorce me from an old friend; but still I will follow him so far as is either possible or honest, and then I will leave him with sorrow.

LVII.—True friendship necessarily requires patience; for there is no man in whom I shall not mislike somewhat, and who shall not as justly mislike somewhat in me. My friend's faults, therefore, if little, I will swallow and digest; if great, I will smother them: however, I will wink at them to others, but lovingly notify them to himself.

LVIII.—Injuries hurt not more in the receiving than in the remembrance. A small injury shall go as it comes; a great injury may dine or sup with me, but none at all shall lodge with me. Why should I vex myself because another hath vexed me?

LIX.—It is good dealing with that over which we have the most power. If my estate will not be framed to my mind, I will labour to frame my mind to my estate.

LX.—It is a great misery to be either always or never alone: society of men hath not so much gain as distraction. In greatest company I will be alone to myself; in greatest privacy, in company with God.

LXI.—Grief for things past that cannot be remedied, and care

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for things to come that cannot be prevented, may easily hurt, can never benefit me. I will therefore commit myself to God in both, and enjoy the present.

LXII.—Let my estate be never so mean, I will ever keep myself rather beneath, than either level or above it. A man may rise when he will with honour, but cannot fall without shame.

LXIII.—Nothing doth so befool a man as extreme passion. This doth both make them fools which otherwise are not, and show them to be fools that are so. Violent passions, if I cannot tame them, that they may yield to my ease, I will at least smother them by concealment, that they may not appear to my shame.

LXIV.—The mind of man, though infinite in desire, yet is finite in capacity. Since I cannot hope to know all things, I will labour first to know what I needs must for their use; next, what I best may for their convenience.

LXV.—Though time be precious to me, as all irrevocable good things deserve to be, and of all other things I would not be lavish of it; yet I will account no time lost that is either lent to or bestowed upon my friend.

LXVI.—The practices of the best men are more subject to error than their speculations. I will honour good examples, but I will live by good precepts.

LXVII.—As charity requires forgetfulness of evil deeds, so patience requires forgetfulness of evil accidents. I will remember evils past, to humble me, not to vex me.

LXVIII.—It is both a misery and a shame for a man to be a bankrupt in love, which he may easily pay, and be never the more impoverished. I will be in no man's debt for good-will; but will at least return every man his own measure, if not with usury. It is much better to be a creditor than a debtor in any thing, but especially of this: yet of this I will so be content to be a debtor, that I will always be paying it where I owe it, and yet never will have so paid it that I shall not owe it more.

LXIX.—The Spanish proverb is too true, "Dead men and absent find no friends." All mouths are boldly opened with a conceit of impunity. My ear shall be no grave to bury my friend's good name. But as I will be my present friend's self, so will I be my absent friend's deputy, to say for him what he would and cannot speak for himself.

LXX.—The loss of my friend, as it shall moderately grieve me,

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so it shall another way much benefit me in recompense of his want; for it shall make me think more often and seriously of earth and of heaven: of earth, for his body, which is reposed in it; of heaven, for his soul, which possesseth it before me: of earth, to put me in mind of my like frailty and mortality; of heaven, to make me desire, and after a sort emulate his happiness and glory.

LXXI.—Variety of objects is wont to cause distraction; when again, a little one laid close to the eye, if but of a penny breadth, wholly takes up the sight, which could else see the whole half heaven at once. I will have the eyes of my mind ever forestalled and filled with these two objects—the shortness of my life, eternity after death.

LXXII.—I see that he is more happy that hath nothing to lose, than he that loseth that which he hath. I will therefore neither hope for riches nor fear poverty.

LXXIII.—I care not so much in any thing for multitude as for choice. Books and friends I would not have many; I had rather seriously converse with a few, than wander amongst many.

LXXIV.—The wicked man is a very coward, and is afraid of every thing; of God, because he is his enemy; of Satan, because he is his tormentor; of God's creatures, because they, joining with their Maker, fight against him; of himself, because he bears about him his own accuser and executioner. The godly man, contrarily, is afraid of nothing: not of God, because he knows him his best friend, and therefore will not hurt him; not of Satan, because he cannot hurt him; not of afflictions, because he knows they proceed from a loving God, and end to his own good; not of the creatures, since the very stones of the field are in league with him; not of himself, since his conscience is at peace. A wicked man may be secure, because he knows not what he hath to fear; or desperate, through extremity of fear; but truly courageous he cannot be. Faithlessness cannot choose but be falsehearted. I will ever by my courage take trial of my faith; by how much more I fear, by so much less I believe.

LXXV.—The godly man lives hardly, and, like the ant, toils here during the summer of his peace, holding himself short of his pleasures, as looking to provide for a hard winter; which, when it comes, he is able to wear it out comfortably: whereas the wicked man doth prodigally lash out all his joys in the time of his prospe-

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rity; and like the grasshopper, singing merrily all summer, is starved in winter. I will so enjoy the present, that I will lay up more for hereafter.

LXXVI.—I have wondered oft, and blushed for shame, to read in mere philosophers, which had no other mistress but nature, such strange resolution in the contempt of both fortunes, as they call them; such notable precepts for a constant settledness and tranquillity of mind: and to compare it with my own disposition and practice, whom I have found too much drooping and dejected under small crosses, and easily again carried away with little prosperity: to see such courage and strength to contemn death, in those which thought they wholly perished in death; and to find such faintheartedness in myself at the first conceit of death, who yet am throughly persuaded of the future happiness of my soul. I have the benefit of nature as well as they, besides infinite more helps that they wanted. O the dulness and blindness of us unworthy Christians, that suffer heathens, by the dim candlelight of nature, to go farther than we by the clear sun of the gospel, that an indifferent man could not tell by our practice whether were the pagan! Let me never, for shame, account myself a Christian, unless my art of Christianity have imitated and gone beyond nature so far, that I can find the best heathen as far below me in true resolution, as the vulgar sort were below them. Else I may shame religion; it can neither honest nor help me.

LXXVII.—If I would be irreligious and unconscionable, I would make no doubt to be rich: for if a man will defraud, dissemble, forswear, bribe, oppress, serve the time, make use of all men for his own turn, make no scruple of any wicked action for his advantage, I cannot see how he can escape wealth and preferment: but for an upright man to rise is difficult, while his conscience straitly curbs him in from every unjust action, and will not allow him to advance himself by indirect means. So riches come seldom easily to a good man, seldom hardly to the conscienceless. Happy is that man that can be rich with truth, or poor with contentment. I will not envy the gravel in the unjust man's throat. Of riches, let me never have more than an honest man can bear away.

LXXVIII.—God is the God of order, not of confusion. As therefore in natural things he useth to proceed from one extreme to another, by degrees, through the mean; so doth he in spiritual. The sun riseth not at once to his highest from the dark-

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ness of midnight, but first sends forth some feeble glimmering of light in the dawning; then looks out with weak and waterish beams, and so by degrees ascends to the midst of heaven. So in the seasons of the year, we are not one day scorched with a summer heat, and on the next frozen with a sudden extremity of cold; but winter comes on softly, first by cold dews, then hoar frosts, until at last it descend to the hardest weather of all. Such are God's spiritual proceedings. He never brings any man from the estate of sin to the estate of glory but through the estate of grace. And as for grace, he seldom brings a man from gross wickedness to any eminence of perfection. I will be charitably jealous of those men, which from notorious lewdness leap at once into a sudden forwardness of profession. Holiness doth not, like Jonah's gourd, grow up in a night. I like it better to go on soft and sure, than for a hasty fit to run myself out of wind, and after stand still and breathe me.

LXXIX.—It hath been said of old, "To do well and hear ill is princely." Which as it is most true, by reason of the envy which follows upon justice; so is the contrary no less justified by many experiments. To do ill and to hear well is the fashion of many great men: to do ill, because they are borne out with the assurance of impunity; to hear well, because of abundance of parasites, which, as ravens to a carcass, gather about great men. Neither is there any so great misery in greatness as this, that it conceals men from themselves, and when they will needs have a sight of their own actions, it shows them a false glass to look in. Meanness of state, that I can find, hath none so great inconvenience. I am no whit sorry that I am rather subject to contempt than flattery.

LXXX.—There is no earthly blessing so precious as health of body, without which all other worldly good things are but troublesome. Neither is there any thing more difficult, than to have a good soul in a strong and vigorous body; for it is commonly seen that the worse part draws away the better; but to have a healthful and sound soul in a weak sickly body is no novelty; while the weakness of the body is an help to the soul, playing the part of a perpetual monitor, to incite it to good and check it for evil. I will not be over-glad of health, nor over-fearful of sickness. I will more fear the spiritual hurt that may follow upon health, than the bodily pain that accompanies sickness.

LXXXI.—There is nothing more troublesome to a good mind

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than to do nothing; for besides the furtherance of our estate, the mind doth both delight and better itself with exercise. There is but this difference, then, betwixt labour and idleness; that labour is a profitable and pleasant trouble, idleness a trouble both unprofitable and comfortless. I will be ever doing something, that either God when he cometh, or Satan when he tempteth, may find me busied. And yet, since, as the old proverb is, "Better it is to be idle than effect nothing;" I will not more hate doing nothing, than doing something to no purpose. I shall do good but a while, let me strive to do it while I may.

LXXXII.—A faithful man hath three eyes; the first of sense, common to him with brute creatures; the second of reason, common to all men; the third of faith, proper to his profession: whereof each looketh beyond other, and none of them meddleth with others' objects. For neither doth the eye of sense reach to intelligible things and matters of discourse, nor the eye of reason to those things which are supernatural and spiritual; neither doth faith look down to things that may be sensibly seen. If thou discourse to a brute beast of the depths of philosophy never so plainly, he understands not, because they are beyond the view of his eye, which is only of sense; if to a mere carnal man of divine things, he perceiveth not the things of God, neither indeed can do, because they are spiritually discerned; and therefore no wonder if those things seem unlikely, incredible, impossible to him, which the faithful man, having a proportionable means of apprehension, doth as plainly see as his eye doth any sensible thing. Tell a plain countryman that the sun, or some higher or lesser star, is much bigger than his cartwheel, or at least so many scores bigger than the whole earth, he laughs thee to scorn, as affecting admiration with a learned untruth. Yet the scholar, by the eye of reason, doth as plainly see and acknowledge this truth, as that his hand is bigger than his pen. What a thick mist, yea what a palpable and more than Egyptian darkness, doth the natural man live in! what a world is there that he doth not see at all! and how little doth he see in this which is his proper element! There is no bodily thing but the brute creatures see as well as he, and some of them better. As for his eye of reason, how dim is it in those things which are best fitted to it! What one thing is there in nature which he doth perfectly know? what herb, or flower, or worm that he treads on, is there, whose true essence he knoweth? No, not so much as what is in his own bosom;

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what it is, where it is, or whence it is, that gives being to himself. But, for those things which concern the best world, he doth not so much as confusedly see them, neither knoweth whether they be. He sees no whit into the great and awful majesty of God. He discerns him not in all his creatures, filling the world with his infinite and glorious presence. He sees not his wise providence overruling all things, disposing all casual events, ordering all sinful actions of men to his own glory. He comprehends nothing of the beauty, majesty, power, and mercy of the Saviour of the world, sitting in his humanity at his Father's right hand. He sees not the unspeakable happiness of the glorified souls of the saints. He sees not the whole heavenly commonwealth of angels, ascending and descending to the behoof of God's children, waiting upon him at all times invisibly, not excluded with closeness of prisons nor desolateness of wildernesses; and the multitude of evil spirits passing and standing by him, to tempt him unto evil: but like unto the foolish bird, when he hath hid his head that he sees nobody, he thinks himself altogether unseen, and then counts himself solitary when his eye can meet with no companion. It was not without cause that we call a mere fool a natural; for however worldlings have still thought Christians God's fools, we know them the fools of the world. The deepest philosopher that ever was, saving the reverence of the schools, is but an ignorant sot to the simplest Christian: for the weakest Christian may, by plain information, see somewhat into the greatest mysteries of nature, because he hath the eye of reason common with the best; but the best philosopher, by all the demonstration in the world, can conceive nothing of the mysteries of godliness, because he utterly wants the eye of faith. Though my insight into matters of the world be so shallow, that my simplicity moveth pity, or maketh sport unto others, it shall be my contentment and happiness, that I see farther into better matters. That which I see not, is worthless, and deserves little better than contempt; that which I see, is unspeakable, inestimable, for comfort, for glory.

LXXXIII.—It is not possible for an inferior to live at peace, unless he have learned to be contemned; for the pride of his superiors, and the malice of his equals and inferiors, shall offer him continual and inevitable occasions of unquietness. As contentation is the mother of inward peace with ourselves, so is humility the mother of peace with others; for if thou be vile in thine own eyes first, it shall the less trouble thee to be accounted

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vile of others. So that a man of an high heart in a low place cannot want discontentment; whereas a man of lowly stomach can swallow and digest contempt without any distemper: for wherein can he be the worse for being contemned, who, out of his own knowledge of his deserts, did most of all contemn himself? I should be very improvident, if in this calling I did not look for daily contempt; wherein *we are made a spectacle to the world, to angels, and men.* When it comes, I will either embrace it or contemn it; embrace it, when it is within my measure, when above, contemn it; so embrace it, that I may more humble myself under it, and so contemn it, that I may not give heart to him that offers it, nor disgrace Him for whose cause I am contemned.

LXXXIV.—Christ raised three dead men to life; one newly departed, another on the bier, a third smelling in the grave; to show us that no degree of death is so desperate that it is past help. My sins are many and great; yet, if they were more, they are far below the mercy of him that hath remitted them, and the value of his ransom that hath paid for them. A man hurts himself most by presumption; but we cannot do God a greater wrong than to despair of forgiveness. It is a double injury to God; first, that we offend his justice by sinning; then, that we wrong his mercy with despairing, &c.

LXXXV.—For a man to be weary of the world through miseries that he meets with, and for that cause to covet death, is neither difficult nor commendable, but rather argues a base weakness of mind. So it may be a cowardly part to contemn the utmost of all terrible things, in a fear of lingering misery; but for a man, either living happily here on earth, or resolving to live miserably, yet to desire his removal to heaven, doth well become a true Christian courage, and argues a notable mixture of patience and faith: of patience, for that he can and dare abide to live sorrowfully; of faith, for that he is assured of his better being otherwhere, and therefore prefers the absent joys he looks for to those he feels in present. No sorrow shall make me wish myself dead, that I may not be at all; no contentment shall hinder me from wishing myself with Christ, that I may be happier.

LXXXVI.—It was not for nothing that the wise Creator of all things hath placed gold and silver, and all precious minerals, under our feet, to be trod upon, and hath hid them low in the bowels of the earth, that they cannot without great labour be either found or gotten; whereas he hath placed the noblest part

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of his creation above our heads, and that so open to our view, that we cannot choose but every moment behold them. Wherein what did he else intend, but to draw away our minds from these worthless and yet hidden treasures, to which he foresaw we would be too much addicted, and to call them to the contemplation of those better things, which, beside their beauty, are more obvious to us; that in them we might see and admire the glory of their Maker, and withal seek our own? How do those men wrong themselves and misconstrue God, who, as if he had hidden these things because he would have them sought, and laid the other open for neglect, bend themselves wholly to the seeking of these earthly commodities, and do no more mind heaven than if there were none? If we could imagine a beast to have reason, how could he be more absurd in his choice? How easy is it to observe, that still the higher we go, the more purity and perfection we find! (so earth is the very dross and dregs of all the elements; water somewhat more pure than it, yet also more feculent than the air above it; the lower air less pure than his uppermost regions; and yet they as far inferior to the lowest heavens; which again are more exceeded by the glorious and empyreal seat of God, which is the heaven of the just): yet these brutish men take up their rest and place their felicity in the lowest and worst of all God's workmanship, not regarding that which, with its own glory, can make them happy. Heaven is the proper place of my soul; I will send it up thither continually in my thoughts, while it sojourns with me, before it go to dwell there for ever.

LXXXVII.—A man need not to care for more knowledge than to know himself: he needs no more pleasure than to content himself; no more victory than to overcome himself; no more riches than to enjoy himself. What fools are they that seek to know all other things, and are strangers in themselves; that seek altogether to satisfy others' humours with their own displeasure; that seek to vanquish kingdoms and countries, when they are not masters of themselves; that have no hold of their own hearts, yet seek to be possessed of all outward commodities! Go home to thyself first, vain heart, and when thou hast made sure work there, in knowing, contenting, overcoming, enjoying thyself, spend all the superfluity of thy time and labour upon others.

LXXXVIII.—It was an excellent rule that fell from Epicure (whose name is odious to us for the father of looseness), that if a man would be rich, honourable, aged, he should not strive so

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much to add to his wealth, reputation, years, as to detract from his desires. For certainly in these things, which stand most upon conceit, he hath the most that desireth least. A poor man, that hath little, and desires no more, is in truth richer than the greatest monarch, that thinks he hath not what he should or what he might, or that grieves there is no more to have. It is not necessity, but ambition, that sets men's hearts on the rack. If I have meat, drink, apparel, I will learn therewith to be content. If I had the world full of wealth beside, I could enjoy no more than I use; the rest could please me no otherwise but by looking on. And why can I not thus solace myself while it is others'?

LXXXIX.—An inconstant and wavering mind, as it makes a man unfit for society (for that there can be no assurance of his words or purposes, neither can we build on them without deceit), so, besides that it makes a man ridiculous, it hinders him from ever attaining any perfection in himself (for a rolling stone gathers no moss; and the mind, whilst it would be every thing, proves nothing: oft changes cannot be without loss); yea, it keeps him from enjoying that which he hath attained; for it keeps him ever in work; building, pulling down, selling, changing, buying, commanding, forbidding: so, while he can be no other man's friend, he is the least his own. It is the safest course for a man's profit, credit, and ease, to deliberate long, to resolve surely; hardly to alter; not to enter upon that whose end he foresees not answerable; and when he is once entered, not to surcease till he have attained the end he foresaw. So may he to good purpose begin a new work when he hath well finished the old.

XC.—The way to heaven is like that which Jonathan and his armour-bearer passed, betwixt two rocks; one Bozez, the other Seneh; that is, foul and thorny; whereto we must make shift to climb on our hands and knees; but when we are come up, there is victory and triumph. God's children have three suits of apparel; whereof two are worn daily on earth, the third laid up for them in the wardrobe of heaven: they are ever either in black, mourning; in red, persecuted; or in white, glorious. Any way shall be pleasant to me that leads unto such an end. It matters not what rags or what colours I wear with men, so I may walk with my Saviour in white, and reign with him in glory.

XCI.—There is nothing more easy than to say divinity by rote, and to discourse of spiritual matters from the tongue or pen of others; but to hear God speak it to the soul, and to feel the

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power of religion in ourselves, and to express it out of the truth of experience within, is both rare and hard. All that we feel not in the matters of God is but hypocrisy; and therefore, the more we profess, the more we sin. It will never be well with me till in these greatest things I be careless of others' censures, fearful only of God's and my own; till sound experience have really catechized my heart, and made me know God and my Saviour otherwise than by words. I will never be quiet, till I can see and feel and taste God; my hearing I will account as only serving to effect this, and my speech only to express it.

XCII.—There is no enemy can hurt us but by our own hands. Satan could not hurt us, if our own corruption betrayed us not; afflictions cannot hurt us, without our own impatience; temptations cannot hurt us, without our own yieldance; death could not hurt us, without the sting of our own sins; sin could not hurt us, without our own impenitence: how might I defy all things if I could obtain not to be my own enemy! I love myself too much, and yet not enough. O God, teach me to wish myself but so well as thou wishest me, and I am safe.

XCIII.—It grieves me to see all other creatures so officious to their Maker in their kind: that both winds and sea, and heaven and earth, obey him with all readiness: that each of these hears other, and all of them their Creator; though to the destruction of themselves: and man only is rebellious; imitating herein the evil spirits, who, in the receipt of a more excellent kind of reason, are yet more perverse. Hence it is that the prophets are oft-times fain to turn their speech to the earth void of all sense and life, from this living earth informed with reason: that only, which should make us more pliable, stiffeneth us. God could force us, if he pleased; but he had rather incline us by gentleness. I must stoop to his power, why do I not stoop to his will? It is a vain thing to resist his voice whose hand we cannot resist.

XCIV. As all natural bodies are mixed, so must all our moral dispositions. No simple passion doth well. If our joy be not allayed with sorrow, it is madness; and if our sorrow be not tempered with some mixture of joy, it is hellish and desperate. If in these earthly things we hope without all doubt, or fear without all hope, we offend on both sides; if we labour without all recreation, we grow dull and heartless; if we sport ourselves without all labour, we grow wild and unprofitable. These com-

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positions are wholesome, as for the body so for the mind; which, though it be not of a compounded substance as the body, yet hath much variety of qualities and affections, and those contrary to each other. I care not how simple my heavenly affections are; which, the more free they are from composition, are the nearer to God: nor how compounded my earthly, which are easily subject to extremities. If joy come alone, I will ask him for his fellow; and evermore, in spite of him, couple him with his contrary: that so, while each are enemies to other, both may be friends to me.

XCV.—Joy and sorrow are hard to conceal, as from the countenance so from the tongue. There is so much correspondence betwixt the heart and tongue, that they will move at once: every man, therefore, speaks of his own pleasure and care; the hunter and falconer, of his games; the ploughman, of his team; the soldier, of his march and colours. If the heart were as full of God, the tongue could not refrain to talk of him: the rareness of Christian communication argues the common poverty of grace. If Christ be not in our hearts, we are godless: if he be there without our joy, we are senseless: if we rejoice in him and speak not of him, we are shamefully unthankful. Every man taketh, yea raiseth occasion, to bring in speech of what he liketh. As I will think of thee always, O Lord; so it shall be my joy to speak of thee often: and if I find not opportunity, I will make it.

XCVI.—When I see my Saviour hanging in so forlorn a fashion upon the cross; his head drooping down; his temples bleeding with thorns, his hands and feet with the nails, and side with the spear; his enemies round about him, mocking at his shame, and insulting over his impotence: how should I think any otherwise of him than, as himself complaineth, forsaken of his Father? But, when again I turn mine eyes, and see the sun darkened, the earth quaking, the rocks rent, the graves opened, the thief confessing, to give witness to his Deity; and when I see so strong a guard of Providence over him, that all his malicious enemies are not able so much as to break one bone of that body which seemed carelessly neglected; I cannot but wonder at his glory and safety. God is ever near, though oft unseen; and if he wink at our distress, he sleepeth not. The sense of others must not be judges of his presence and care, but our faith. What care I, if the world give me up for miserable, while I am under his secret protection? O Lord, since thou art strong in our weakness, and

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present in our senselessness, give me but as much comfort in my sorrow as thou givest me security, and at my worst I shall be well.

XCVII.—In sins and afflictions our course must be contrary: we must begin to detest the greatest sin first, and descend to the hatred of the least: we must first begin to suffer small afflictions with patience, that we may ascend to the endurance of the greatest: then alone shall I be happy, when, by this holy method, I have drawn my soul to make conscience of the least evil of sin, and not to shrink at the greatest evil of affliction.

XCVIII.—Prescription is no plea against the king: much less can long custom plead for error against that our supreme Lord, to whom a thousand years are but as yesterday. Yea, time, which pleads voluntarily for continuance of things lawful, will take no fee not to speak against an evil use. Hath an ill custom lasted long? It is more than time it were abrogated: age is an aggravation to sin. Heresy or abuse, if it be gray-headed, deserves sharper opposition. To say, "I will do ill because I have done so," is perilous and impious presumption. Continuance can no more make any wickedness safe, than the author of sin no devil. If I have once sinned, it is too much: if oft, woe be to me; if the iteration of my offence cause boldness, and not rather more sorrow, more detestation: woe be to me and my sin, if I be not the better because I have sinned.

XCIX.—It is strange to see the varieties and proportion of spiritual and bodily diets. There be some creatures that are fatted and delighted with poisons; others live by nothing but air; and some, they say, by fire: others will taste no water, but muddy: others feed on their fellows, or perhaps on part of themselves: others, on the excretions of nobler creatures: some search into the earth for sustenance, or dive into the waters; others content themselves with what the upper earth yields them, without violence. All these, and more, are answered in the palate of the soul: there be some, yea the most, to whom sin, which of a most venomous nature, is both food and dainties; others, that think it the only life to feed on the popular air of applause; others, that are never well out of the fire of contentions, and that wilfully trouble all waters with their private humours and opinions; others, whose cruelty delights in oppression and blood, yea whose envy gnaws upon their own hearts; others, that take pleasure to revive the wicked and foul heresies of the greater wits

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of the former times; others, whose worldly minds root altogether in earthly cares, or who, not content with the ordinary provision of doctrine, affect obscure subtleties unknown to wiser men; others, whose too indifferent minds feed on whatever opinion comes next to hand, without any careful disquisition of truth: so, some feed foul; others, but few, clean and wholesome. As there is no beast upon earth which hath not his like in the sea, and which perhaps is not in some sort paralleled in the plants of the earth; so there is no bestial disposition which is not answerably found in some men: mankind, therefore, hath within itself his goats, chameleons, salamanders, camels, wolves, dogs, swine, moles, and whatever sorts of beasts: there are but a few men amongst men. To a wise man, the shape is not so much as the qualities. If I be not a man within, in my choices, affections, inclinations, it had been better for me to have been a beast without: a beast is but like itself; but an evil man is half a beast and half a devil.

C.—Forced favours are thankless; and, commonly, with noble minds find no acceptation. For a man to give his soul to God, when he sees he can no longer hold it; or to bestow his goods, when he is forced to part with them; or to forsake his sin, when he cannot follow it; are but unkind and cold obediences. God sees our necessity, and scorns our compelled offers. What man of any generous spirit will abide himself made the last refuge of a craved, denied, and constrained courtesy? While God gives me leave to keep my soul, yet then to bequeath it to him; and while strength and opportunity serve me to sin, then to forsake it; is both accepted and crowned: God loves neither grudged nor necessary gifts: I will offer betimes, that he may vouchsafe to take: I will give him the best, that he may take all.

O God, give me this grace, that I may give thee myself, freely and seasonably: and then I know thou canst not but accept me, because this gift is thine own.

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THE THIRD CENTURY

OF

MEDITATIONS AND VOWS,

DIVINE AND MORAL.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

SIR EDMUND BACON, KNIGHT,

INCREASE OF HONOUR, STRENGTH OF BODY, PERFECTION OF VIRTUE.

SIR,

THERE is no wise man would give his thoughts for all the world: which, as they are the most pleasing and noble business of man, being the natural and immediate issue of that reason whereby he is severed from brute creatures; so they are, in their use, most beneficial to ourselves and others. For by the means hereof we enjoy both God and ourselves, and hereby we make others partners of those rich excellencies which God hath hid in the mind. And though it be most easy and safe for a man, with the Psalmist, to commune with his own heart in silence; yet is it more behoveful to the common good, for which, both as men and Christians, we are ordained, that those thoughts, which our experience hath found comfortable and fruitful to ourselves, should, with neglect of all censures, be communicated to others. The concealment whereof, methinks, can proceed from no other ground but either timorousness or envy. Which consideration hath induced me to clothe these naked thoughts in plain and simple words, and to adventure them into the light after their fellows; consecrating them the rather to your name, for that, besides all other respects of duty, they are part of those meditations, which, in my late peregrination with you, took me up under the solitary hills of Ardenna[a], wanting as then the opportunity of their employment. I offer them to you, not for that yourself are not stored with choice of better, but as poor men use to bring presents to the rich. If they may carry acceptation from you, and bring profit unto any soul, it shall abundantly satisfy me; who should think it honour enough, if I might be vouchsafed to bring but one pin towards the decking of the spouse of Christ; while others, out of their abundance, adorn her with costly robes and rich medals. I commend their success to God, their patronage to you, their use to the world. That God multiply his rare favours upon you and your worthy lady, and go you on to favour

Your Worship's humble devoted,

JOS. HALL.

[a] [Alluding to his journey in company with Sir E. Bacon to Spa about 1605.]

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CENTURY III.

I.—Good men are placed by God as so many stars in the lower firmament of the world. As they must imitate those heavenly bodies in their light and influence, so also in their motion; and therefore, as the planets have a course proper to themselves, against the sway of the heaven that carries them about, so must each good man have a motion out of his own judgment contrary to the customs and opinions of the vulgar, finishing his own course with the least show of resistance. I will never affect singularity, except it be among those that are vicious. It is better to do or think well alone, than to follow a multitude in evil.

II.—What strange variety of actions doth the eye of God see at once, round about the compass of the earth, and within it! Some building houses, some delving for metals, some marching in troops, or encamping one against another; some bargaining in the market, some travelling on their way, some praying in their closets, others quaffing at the tavern, some rowing in the galleys, others dallying in their chambers; and, in short, as many different actions as persons; yet all have one common intention of good to themselves: true in some, but in the most imaginary. The glorified spirits have but one uniform work, wherein they all join—the praise of their Creator. This is one difference betwixt the saints above and below; they above are free both from business and distraction; these below are free (though not absolutely) from distraction, not at all from business. Paul could think of the cloak that he left at Troas, and of the shaping of his skins for his tents; yet through these he looked still at heaven. This world is made for business. My actions must vary according to occasions. My end shall be but one, and the same now on earth that it must be one day in heaven.

III.—To see how the martyrs of God died, and the life of their persecutors, would make a man out of love with life, and out of all fear of death. They were flesh and blood, as well as we; life was as sweet to them as to us; their bodies were as sensible of pain as ours; we go to the same heaven with them. How comes it then that they were so courageous in abiding such torments in their death, as the very mention strikes horror into any reader; and

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we are so cowardly in encountering a fair and natural death? If this valour had been of themselves, I would never have looked after them in hope of imitation; now I know it was He for whom they suffered, and that suffered in them, which sustained them. They were of themselves as weak as I, and God can be as strong in me as he was in them. O Lord, thou art not more unable to give me this grace, but I am more unworthy to receive it; and yet thou regardest not worthiness, but mercy. Give me their strength, and what end thou wilt.

IV.—Our first age is all in hope. When we are in the womb, who knows whether we shall have our right shape and proportion of body, being neither monstrous nor deformed? When we are born, who knows whether, with the due features of a man, we shall have the faculties of reason and understanding? When yet our progress in years discovereth wit or folly, who knows whether, with the power of reason, we shall have the grace of faith to be Christians? and when we begin to profess well, whether it be a temporary and seeming, or a true and saving faith? Our middle age is half in hope for the future, and half in proof, for that is past; our old age is out of hope, and altogether in proof. In our last times, therefore, we know both what we have been and what to expect. It is good for youth to look forward, and still to propound the best things unto itself; for an old man to look backward, and to repent him of that wherein he hath failed, and to recollect himself for the present; but in my middle age, I will look both backward and forward, comparing my hopes with my proof, redeeming the time ere it be all spent, that my recovery may prevent my repentance. It is both a folly and misery to say, "This I might have done."

V.—It is the wonderful mercy of God, both to forgive us our debts to him in our sins, and to make himself a debtor to us in his promises; so that now, both ways, the soul may be sure, since he neither calleth for those debts which he hath once forgiven, nor withdraweth those favours and that heaven which he hath promised; but as he is a merciful creditor to forgive, so he is a true debtor to pay whatsoever he hath undertaken. Whence it is come to pass, that the penitent sinner owes nothing to God but love and obedience, and God owes still much and all to him; for he owes as much as he hath promised, and what he owes by virtue of his blessed promise we may challenge. O infinite mercy! He that lent us all that we have, and in whose debt-books we run

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hourly forward till the sum be endless, yet owes us more, and bids us look for payment. I cannot deserve the least favour he can give, yet will I as confidently challenge the greatest as if I deserved it. Promise indebteth no less than loan or desert.

VI.—It is no small commendation, to manage a little well. He is a good wagoner that can turn in a narrow room. To live well in abundance is the praise of the estate, not of the person. I will study more how to give a good account of my little, than how to make it more.

VII.—Many Christians do greatly wrong themselves with a dull and heavy kind of sullenness, who not suffering themselves to delight in any worldly thing, are thereupon ofttimes so heartless, that they delight in nothing. These men, like to careless guests, when they are invited to an excellent banquet, lose their dainties for want of a stomach, and lose their stomach for want of exercise. A good conscience keeps always good cheer; he cannot choose but fare well that hath it, unless he lose his appetite with neglect and slothfulness. It is a shame for us Christians not to find as much joy in God, as worldlings do in their forced merriments, and lewd wretches in the practice of their sins.

VIII.—A wise Christian hath no enemies. Many hate and wrong him, but he loves all, and all pleasure him. Those that profess love to him pleasure him with the comfort of their society, and the mutual reflection of friendship; those that profess hatred make him more wary of his ways, show him faults in himself which his friends would either not have espied or not censured, send him the more willingly to seek favour above; and as the worst do bestead him, though against their wills, so he again doth voluntarily good to them. To do evil for evil, as Job to Abner, is a sinful weakness; to do good for good, as Ahasuerus to Mordecai, is but natural justice; to do evil for good, as Judas to Christ, is unthankfulness and villany; only to do good for evil agrees with Christian profession. And what greater work of friendship than to do good? If men will not be my friends in love, I will perforce make them my friends in a good use of their hatred. I will be their friend that are mine, and would not be.

IX.—All temporal things are troublesome: for if we have good things it is a trouble to forego them; and when we see they must be parted from, either we wish they had not been so good, or that we never had enjoyed them. Yea, it is more trouble to lose them than it was before joy to possess them. If, contrarily, we have

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evil things, their very presence is troublesome; and still we wish that they were good, or that we were disburdened of them. So good things are troublesome in event, evil things in their use; they in the future, these in the present; they, because they shall come to an end, these, because they do continue. Tell me, thy wife or thy child lies dying, and now makes up a loving and dutiful life with a kind and loving parture; whether hadst thou rather, for thy own part, she had been so good or worse? would it have cost thee so many hearty sighs and tears, if she had been perverse and disobedient? Yet if in her lifetime I put thee to this choice, thou thinkest it no choice at all, in such inequality. It is more torment, sayest thou, to live one unquiet month, than it is pleasure to live an age in love. Or if thy life be yet dearer; thou hast lived to gray hairs, not hastened with care, but bred with late succession of years: thy table was ever covered with variety of dishes; thy back softly and richly clad: thou never gavest denial to either skin or stomach: thou ever favouredst thyself, and health thee. Now death is at thy threshold, and unpartially knocks at thy door; dost thou not wish thou hadst lived with crusts, and been clothed with rags? wouldest not thou have given a better welcome to death, if he had found thee lying upon a pallet of straw, and supping of water-gruel, after many painful nights, and many sides changed in vain? Yet this beggarly estate thou detestest in health, and pitiest in others, as truly miserable. The sum is: a beggar wisheth he might be a monarch while he lives, and the great potentate wisheth he had lived a beggar when he comes to die; and if beggary be to have nothing, he shall be so in death, though he wished it not. Nothing therefore but eternity can make a man truly happy, as nothing can make perfect misery but eternity; for as temporal good things afflict us in their ending, so temporal sorrows afford us joy in the hope of their end. What folly is this in us, to seek for our trouble, to neglect our happiness! I can be but well; and this, that I was well, shall one day be grievous. Nothing shall please me, but that once I shall be happy for ever.

X.—The eldest of our forefathers lived not so much as a day to God, to whom a thousand years is as no more; we live but as an hour to the day of our forefathers; for if nine hundred and sixty were but their day, our fourscore is but as the twelfth part of it. And yet of this our hour we live scarce a minute to God: for take away all that time that is consumed in sleeping, dressing,

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feeding, talking, sporting; of that little time there can remain not much more than nothing: yet the most seek pastimes to hasten it. Those which seek to mend the pace of time spur a running horse. I had more need to redeem it with double care and labour, than to seek how to sell it for nothing.

XI.—Each day is a new life, and an abridgment of the whole. I will so live, as if I counted every day my first and my last; as if I began to live but then, and should live no more afterwards.

XII.—It was not in vain that the ancient founders of languages used the same word in many tongues to signify both honour and charge, meaning therein to teach us the inseparable connection of these two. For there scarce ever was any charge without some opinion of honour; neither ever was there honour without a charge: which two, as they are not without reason joined together in name by human institution; so they are most wisely coupled together by God, in the disposition of these worldly estates. Charge, without honour to make it amends, would be too toilsome, and must needs discourage and overlay a man: honour, without charge, would be too pleasant; and therefore both would be too much sought after, and must needs carry away the mind in the enjoying it. Now many dare not be ambitious, because of the burden; choosing rather to live obscurely and securely: and yet, on the other side, those that are under it are refreshed in the charge with the sweetness of honour. Seeing they cannot be separated, it is not the worst estate to want both. They whom thou enviest for honour perhaps envy thee more for thy quietness.

XIII.—He that taketh his own cares upon himself loads himself in vain with an uneasy burden. The fear of what may come, expectation of what will come, desire of what will not come, and inability of redressing all these, must needs breed him continual torment. I will cast my cares upon God; he hath bidden me: they cannot hurt him; he can redress them.

XIV.—Our infancy is full of folly, youth of disorder and toil, age of infirmity. Each time hath his burden, and that which may justly work our weariness: yet infancy longeth after youth, and youth after more age; and he that is very old, as he is a child for simplicity, so he would be for years. I account old age the best of the three; partly, for that it hath passed through the folly and disorder of the others; partly, for that the inconveniences of this are but bodily, with a bettered estate of the mind; and partly, for that it is nearest to dissolution. There is nothing

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more miserable than an old man that would be young again. It was an answer worthy the commendations of Petrarch, and that which argued a mind truly philosophical of him, who, when his friend bemoaned his age appearing in his white temples, telling him he was sorry to see him look so old, replied, "Nay, be sorry rather, that ever I was young, to be a fool."

XV.—There is not the least action or event, whatever the vain Epicures have imagined, which is not overruled and disposed by a Providence; which is so far from detracting aught from the majesty of God, for that the things are small, as that there can be no greater honour to him, than to extend his providence and decree to them, because they are infinite. Neither doth this hold in natural things only, which are chained one to another by a regular order of succession, but even in those things which fall out by casualty and imprudence: whence that worthy father, when as his speech digressed his intention to a confutation of the errors of the Manichees, could presently guess, that in that unpurposed turning of it God intended the conversion of some unknown auditor; as the event proved his conjecture true ere many days. When aught falls out contrary to that I purposed, it shall content me that God purposed it as it is fallen out; so the thing hath attained his own end, while it missed mine. I know what I would, but God knoweth what I should will. It is enough, that his will is done, though mine be crossed.

XVI.—It is the most thankless office in the world to be a man's pander unto sin. In other wrongs, one man is a wolf to another; but in this, a devil. And though at the first this damnable service carry away reward, yet in conclusion it is requited with hatred and curses. For as the sick man, extremely distasted with a loathsome potion, hateth the very cruse wherein it was brought him; so doth the conscience, once soundly detesting sin, loathe the means that induced him to commit it. Contrarily, who withstands a man in his prosecution of a sin, while he doteth upon it, bears away frowns and heart-burnings for a time; but when the offending party comes to himself and right reason, he recompenseth his former dislike with so much more love, and so many more thanks. The frantic man, returned to his wits, thinks him his best friend that bound him, and beat him most. I will do my best to cross any man in his sins: if I have not thanks of him, yet of my conscience I shall.

XVII.—God must be magnified in his very judgments. He

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looks for praise, not only for heaven, but for hell also. His justice is himself, as well as his mercy. As heaven then is for the praise of his mercy, so hell for the glory of his justice. We must therefore be so affected to judgments as the Author of them is; who delighteth not in blood, as it makes his creature miserable, but as it makes his justice glorious. Every true Christian, then, must learn to sing that compound ditty of the Psalmist; *Of mercy and judgment.* It shall not only joy me to see God gracious and bountiful in his mercies and deliverances of his own, but also to see him terrible in vengeance to his enemies. It is no cruelty to rejoice in justice. The foolish mercy of men is cruelty to God.

XVIII.—Rareness causeth wonder, and, more than that, incredulity in those things which in themselves are not more admirable than the ordinary proceedings of nature. If a blazing star be seen in the sky, every man goes forth to gaze, and spends every evening some time in wondering at the beams of it. That any fowl should be bred of corrupted wood resolved into worms; or that the chameleon should ever change his colours, and live by air; that the ostrich should digest iron; that the phœnix should burn herself to ashes, and from thence breed a successor; we wonder, and can scarce credit. Other things more usual, no less miraculous, we know and neglect. That there should be a bird that knoweth and noteth the hours of day and night as certainly as any astronomer by the course of heaven, if we knew not, who would believe? Or that the loadstone should by his secret virtue so draw iron to itself, as that a whole chain of needles should all hang by insensible points at each other, only by the influence that it sends down from the first, if it were not ordinary would seem incredible. Who would believe, when he sees a fowl mounted as high as his sight can descry it, that there were an engine to be framed which could fetch it down into his fist? Yea, to omit infinite examples, that a little despised creature should weave nets out of her own entrails, and in her platforms of building should observe as just proportions as the best geometrician, we should suspect for an untruth, if we saw it not daily practised in our own windows. If the sun should arise but once to the earth, I doubt every man would be a Persian, and fall down and worship it; whereas now, it riseth and declineth without any regard. Extraordinary events each man can wonder at. The frequence of God's best works causeth neglect; not that they are ever the worse for commonness, but because we are soon cloyed with the same conceit,

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and have contempt bred in us through familiarity. I will learn to note God's power and wisdom, and to give him praise of both in his ordinary works; so those things which are but trivial to the most ignorant shall be wonders to me, and that, not for nine days, but for ever.

XIX.—Those that affect to tell novelties and wonders fall into many absurdities, both in busy inquiry after matters impertinent, and in a light credulity to whatever they hear; and in fictions of their own, and additions of circumstances, to make their reports the more admired. I have noted these men, not so much wondered at for their strange stories while they are telling, as derided afterwards, when the event hath wrought their disproof and shame. I will deal with rumours as grave men do with strange fashions, take them up when they are grown into common use before: I may believe, but I will not relate them but under the name of my author, who shall either warrant me with defence, if it be true, or if false, bear my shame.

XX.—It was a witty and true speech of that obscure Heraclitus, that all men, awaking, are in one common world; but when we sleep, each man goes into a several world by himself; which though it be but a world of fancies, yet is the true image of that little world which is in every man's heart; for the imaginations of our sleep show us what our disposition is, awaking: and as many in their dreams reveal those their secrets to others which they would never have done awake; so all may and do disclose to themselves in their sleep those secret inclinations, which, after much searching, they could not have found out waking. I doubt not therefore but as God heretofore, hath taught future things in dreams, which kind of revelation is now ceased, so still he teacheth the present estate of the heart this way. Some dreams are from ourselves, vain and idle, like ourselves; others are divine, which teach us good, or move us to good; and others devilish, which solicit us to evil. Such answer commonly shall I give to any temptation in the day, as I do by night. I will not lightly pass over my very dreams. They shall teach me somewhat; so neither night nor day shall be spent unprofitably: the night shall teach me what I am, the day what I should be.

XXI.—Men make difference betwixt servants, friends, and sons. Servants, though near us in place, yet, for their inferiority, are not familiar. Friends, though by reason of their equality and our love they are familiar, yet still we conceive of them as others

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from ourselves. But children we think of affectionately, as the divided pieces of our own bodies. But all these are one to God; his servants are his friends, his friends are his sons, his sons his servants. Many claim kindred of God, and profess friendship to him, because these are privileges without difficulty, and not without honour: all the trial is in service; the other are most in affection, and therefore secret, and so may be dissembled; this, consisting in action, must needs show itself to the eyes of others: *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you:* friendship with God is in service, and this service is in action. Many wear God's cloth that know not their Master, that never did good char in his service; so that God hath many retainers, that wear his livery for a countenance; never wait on him; whom he will never own for servants, either by favour or wages. Few servants, and therefore few sons. It is great favour in God, and great honour to me, that he will vouchsafe to make me the lowest drudge in his family; which place if I had not, and were a monarch of men, I were accursed. I desire no more but to serve; yet, Lord, thou givest me more, to be thy son. I hear David say, *Seemeth it a small matter to you to be the son-in-law to a king?* What is it then, O what is it, to be the true adopted son of the King of glory! Let me not now say as David of Saul, but as Saul's grandchild to David; *O, what is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?*

XXII.—I am a stranger here below, my home is above; yet I can think too well of these foreign vanities, and cannot think enough of my home. Surely that is not so far above my head as my thoughts, neither doth so far pass me in distance as in comprehension; and yet I would not stand so much upon conceiving, if I could admire it enough; but my strait heart is filled with a little wonder, and hath no room for the greatest part of glory that remaineth. O God, what happiness hast thou prepared for thy chosen! What a purchase was this, worthy of the blood of such a Saviour! As yet I do but look towards it afar off; but it is easy to see by the outside how goodly it is within; although, as thy house on earth, so that above, hath more glory within than can be bewrayed by the outward appearance. The outer part of thy tabernacle here below is but an earthly and base substance; but within, it is furnished with a living, spiritual, and heavenly guest: so the outer heavens, though they be as gold to all other material creatures, yet they are but dross to thee. Yet how are

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even the outmost walls of that house of thine beautified with glorious lights, whereof every one is a world for bigness, and as an heaven for goodliness! O teach me by this to long after and wonder at the inner part, before thou lettest me come in to behold it.

XXIII.—Riches or beauty, or whatever worldly good that hath been, doth but grieve us; that which is, doth not satisfy us; that which shall be, is uncertain. What folly is it to trust to any of them!

XXIV.—Security makes worldlings merry; and therefore are they secure, because they are ignorant. That is only solid joy which ariseth from a resolution; when the heart hath cast up a full account of all causes of disquietness, and findeth the causes of his joy more forcible, thereupon settling itself in a stayed course of rejoicing: for the other, so soon as sorrow makes itself to be seen, especially in an unexpected form, is swallowed up in despair; whereas this can meet with no occurrence which it hath not prevented in thought. Security and ignorance may scatter some refuse morsels of joy, sauced with much bitterness; or may be like some boasting housekeeper, which keepeth open doors for one day with much cheer, and lives starvedly all the year after. There is no good ordinary but in a good conscience. I pity that unsound joy in others, and will seek for this sound joy in myself. I had rather weep upon a just cause, than rejoice unjustly.

XXV.—As love keeps the whole law, so love only is the breaker of it, being the ground, as of all obedience, so of all sin; for whereas sin hath been commonly accounted to have two roots, love and fear, it is plain that fear hath his original from love; for no man fears to lose aught but what he loves. Here is sin and righteousness brought both into a short sum, depending both upon one poor affection. It shall be my only care, therefore, to bestow my love well, both for object and measure. All that is good I may love, but in several degrees; what is simply good, absolutely; what is good by circumstance, only with limitation. There be these three things that I may love without exception—God, my neighbour, my soul; yet so as each have their due place: my body, goods, fame, &c., as servants to the former. All other things I will either not care for or hate.

XXVI.—One would not think that pride and basemindedness should so well agree; yea, that they love so together that they never go asunder. That envy ever proceeds from a base mind is

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granted of all. Now the proud man, as he fain would be envied of others, so he envieth all men. His betters he envies, because he is not so good as they; he envies his inferiors, because he fears they should prove as good as he; his equals, because they are as good as he. So under big looks he bears a base mind, resembling some cardinal's mule, which, to make up the train, bears a costly port-mantle stuffed with trash. On the contrary, who is more proud than the basest, (the cynick tramples on Plato's pride, but with a worse,) especially if he be but a little exalted? wherein we see base men so much more haughty, as they have had less before, what they might be proud of. It is just with God, as the proud man is base in himself, so to make him basely esteemed in the eyes of others; and at last, to make him base without pride. I will contemn a proud man, because he is base; and pity him, because he is proud.

XXVII.—Let me but have time to my thoughts; but leisure to think of heaven, and grace to my leisure, and I can be happy in spite of the world. Nothing, but God that gives it, can bereave me of grace, and he will not; for his gifts are without repentance. Nothing but death can abridge me of time; and when I begin to want time to think of heaven, I shall have eternal leisure to enjoy it. I shall be both ways happy; not from any virtue of apprehension in me, (which have no peer in worthiness,) but from the glory of that I apprehend; wherein the act and object are from the Author of happiness. He gives me this glory; let me give him the glory of his gift. His glory is my happiness; let my glory be his.

XXVIII.—God bestows favours upon some in anger, as he strikes other some in love: (the Israelites had better have wanted their quails than to have eaten them with such sauce:) and sometimes at our instance removing a lesser punishment, leaves a greater, though insensible, in the room of it. I will not so much strive against affliction as displeasure. Let me rather be afflicted in love than prosper without it.

XXIX.—It is strange that we men, having so continual use of God, and being so perpetually beholding to him, should be so strange to him, and so little acquainted with him; since we account it a perverse nature in any man, that, being provoked with many kind offices, refuses the familiarity of a worthy friend, which doth still seek it, and hath deserved it. Whence it comes, that we are so loath to think of our dissolution, and going to

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God: for, naturally, where we are not acquainted, we list not to hazard our welcome; choosing rather to spend our money at a simple inn, than to turn in for a free lodging to an unknown host, whom we have only heard of, never had friendship with; whereas, to an entire friend, whose nature and welcome we know, and whom we have elsewhere familiarly conversed withal, we go as boldly and willingly as to our home, knowing that no hour can be unseasonable to such a one. While, on the other side, we scrape acquaintance with the world, that never did us good, even after many repulses. I will not live with God, and in God, without his acquaintance, knowing it my happiness to have such a friend. I will not let one day pass without some act of renewing my familiarity with him; not giving over, till I have given him some testimony of my love to him, and joy in him; and till he hath left behind him some pledge of his continued favour to me.

XXX.—Men for the most part would neither die nor be old. When we see an aged man, that hath overlived all the teeth of his gums, the hair of his head, the sight of his eyes, the taste of his palate, we profess we would not live till such a cumbersome age, wherein we prove burdens to our dearest friends and ourselves; yet, if it be put to our choice what year we would die, we ever shift it off till the next, and want not excuses for this prorogation; rather than fail, alleging, we would live to amend, when yet we do but add more to the heap of our sins by continuance. Nature hath nothing to plead for this folly, but that life is sweet: wherein we give occasion of renewing that ancient check, or one not unlike to it, whereby that primitive vision taxed the timorousness of the shrinking confessors: "Ye would neither live to be old, nor die ere your age: what should I do with you?" The Christian must not think it enough to endure the thought of death with patience, when it is obtruded upon him by necessity, but must voluntarily call it into his mind with joy; not only abiding it should come, but wishing that it might come. I will not leave till I can resolve, if I might die to day, not to live till to-morrow.

XXXI.—As a true friend is the sweetest contentment in the world, so, in his qualities, he well resembleth honey, the sweetest of all liquors. Nothing is more sweet to the taste; nothing more sharp and cleansing, when it meets with an exulcerate sore. For myself, I know I must have faults; and therefore I care not for that friend that I shall never smart by. For my friends, I know

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they cannot be faultless; and, therefore, as they shall find me sweet in their praises and encouragements, so, sharp also in their censure. Either let them abide me no friend to their faults, or no friend to themselves.

XXXII.—In all other things, we are led by profit; but in the main matter of all, we show ourselves utterly unthrifty: and, while we are wise in making good markets in these base commodities, we show ourselves foolish in the great match of our souls. God and the world come both to one shop, and make proffers for our souls: the world, like a frank chapman, says, *All these will I give thee;* showing us his bags and promotions, and thrusting them into our hands: God offers a crown of glory, which yet he tells us we must give him day to perform; and have nothing in present, but our hope, and some small earnest of the bargain: though we know there is no comparison betwixt these two in value, finding these earthly things vain and unable to give any contentment, and those others of invaluable worth and benefit; yet we had rather take these in hand, than trust God on his word for the future, while yet, in the same kind, we choose rather to take some rich lordship in reversion, after the long expectation of three lives expired, than a present sum much under foot. As, contrarily, when God and the world are sellers, and we come to the mart, the world offers fine painted wares, but will not part with them under the price of our torment: God proclaims, *Come, ye that want: buy for naught:* now, we thrifty men, that try all shops for the cheapest pennyworth, refuse God, proffering his precious commodities for nothing; and pay an hard price for that which is worse than nothing, painful. Surely we are wise for any thing but our souls: not so wise for the body, as foolish for them. O Lord, thy payment is sure; and who knows how present? Take the soul, that thou hast both made and bought; and let me rather give my life for thy favour, than take the offers of the world for nothing.

XXXIII.—There was never age that more bragged of knowledge, and yet never any that had less soundness. He that knows not God knoweth nothing; and he that loves not God knows him not; for he is so sweet, and infinitely full of delight, that whoever knows him cannot choose but affect him. The little love of God then argues the great ignorance even of those that profess knowledge. I will not suffer my affections to run before my knowledge, for then I shall love fashionably only, because I

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hear God is worthy of love, and so be subject to relapses: but I will ever lay knowledge as the ground of my love; so as I grow in divine knowledge, I shall still profit in an heavenly zeal.

XXXIV.—Those that travel in long pilgrimages to the holy land, what a number of weary paces they measure! what a number of hard lodgings and known dangers they pass! and at last, when they are come within view of their journey's end, what a large tribute pay they at the Pisan castle to the Turks! and when they are come thither, what see they, but the bare sepulchre wherein their Saviour lay, and the earth that he trod upon, to the increase of a carnal devotion? What labour should I willingly undertake in my journey to the true land of promise, the celestial Jerusalem, where I shall see and enjoy my Saviour himself! What tribute of pain or death should I refuse to pay for my entrance, not into his sepulchre, but his palace of glory, and that not to look upon, but to possess it!

XXXV.—Those that are all in exhortation, no whit in doctrine, are like to them that snuff the candle, but pour not in oil. Again, those that are all in doctrine, nothing in exhortation, drown the wick in oil, but light it not: making it fit for use, if it had fire to put to it; but, as it is, rather capable of good than profitable in present. Doctrine, without exhortation, makes men all brain, no heart: exhortation, without doctrine, makes the heart full, leaves the brain empty. Both together make a man. One makes a man wise, the other good; one serves that we may know our duty, the other, that we may perform it. I will labour in both, but I know not in whether more. Men cannot practise unless they know, and they know in vain if they practise not.

XXXVI.—There be two things in every good work, honour and profit; the latter, God bestows upon us; the former, he keeps to himself. The profit of our works redoundeth not to God: *My well-doing extendeth not to thee.* The honour of our work may not be allowed us: *My glory I will not give to another.* I will not abridge God of his part, that he may not bereave me of mine.

XXXVII.—The proud man hath no god: the envious man hath no neighbour: the angry man hath not himself. What can that man have that wants himself? What is a man better, if he have himself, and want all others? What is he the nearer, if he have himself, and others, and yet want God? What good is it then to be a man, if he be either wrathful, proud, or envious?

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XXXVIII.—Man, that was once the sovereign lord of all creatures, whom they serviceably attended at all times, is now sent to the very basest of all creatures, to learn good qualities; *Go to the pismire, &c.*, and sees the most contemptible creatures preferred before him; *The ass knoweth his owner.* Wherein we, like the miserable heir of some great peer, whose house is decayed through the treason of our progenitors, hear and see what honours and lordships we should have had; but now find ourselves below many of the vulgar. We have not so much cause of exaltation, that we are men, and not beasts, as we have of humiliation, in thinking how much we were once better than we are, and that now in many duties we are men inferior to beasts: so as those whom we contemn, if they had our reason, might more justly contemn us; and, as they are, may teach us by their examples, and do condemn us by their practice.

XXXIX.—The idle man is the devil's cushion, on which he taketh his free ease: who, as he is uncapable of any good, so he is fitly disposed for all evil motions. The standing water soon stinketh; whereas the current ever keeps clear and cleanly; conveying down all noisome matter, that might infect it, by the force of his stream. If I do but little good to others by my endeavours, yet this is great good to me, that by my labour I keep myself from hurt.

XL.—There can be no nearer conjunction in nature than is betwixt the body and the soul; yet these two are of so contrary disposition, that, as it falls out in an ill-matched man and wife, those servants, which the one likes best, are most dispraised of the other; so here, one still takes part against the other in their choice. What benefits the one is the hurt of the other: the glutting of the body pines the soul; and the soul thrives best when the body is pinched. Who can wonder that there is such faction amongst others, that sees so much in his very self? True wisdom is, to take not with the stronger, as the fashion of the world is, but with the better: following herein, not usurped power, but justice. It is not hard to discern whose the right is, whether the servant should rule or the mistress. I will labour to make and keep the peace, by giving each part his own indifferently; but if more be affected with an ambitious contention, I will rather beat Hagar out of doors, than she shall overrule her mistress.

XLI.—I see iron first heated red-hot in the fire, and after

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beaten and hardened with cold water. Thus will I deal with an offending friend; first heat him with deserved praise of his virtue, and then beat upon him with apprehension: so good nurses, when their children are fallen, first take them up and speak them fair, chide them afterwards. Gentle speech is a good preparative for rigour. He shall see that I love him by my approbation, and that I love not his faults by my reproof. If he love himself, he will love those that mislike his vices; and if he love not himself, it matters not whether he love me.

XLII.—The liker we are to God, which is the best and only good, the better and happier we must needs be. All sins make us unlike him, as being contrary to his perfect holiness; but some show more direct contrariety. Such is envy; for whereas God bringeth good out of evil, the envious man fetcheth evil out of good: wherein also his sin proves a kind of punishment; for whereas to good men even evil things work together to their good; contrarily, to the envious, good things work together to their evil. The evil in any man, though never so prosperous, I will not envy, but pity; the good graces I will not repine at, but holily emulate; rejoicing that they are so good, but grieving that I am no better.

XLIII.—The covetous man is like a spider; as in this, that he doth nothing but lay his nets to catch every fly, gaping only for a booty of gain; so yet more, in that, while he makes nets for these flies he consumeth his own bowels; so that which is his life is his death. If there be any creature miserable, it is he; and yet he is least to be pitied, because he makes himself miserable. Such as he is I will account him, and will therefore sweep down his webs and hate his poison.

XLIV.—In heaven there is all life, and no dying; in hell is all death, and no life: in earth there is both living and dying; which, as it is betwixt both, so it prepares for both. So that he which here below dies to sin doth after live in heaven; and, contrarily, he that lives in sin upon earth dies in hell afterward. What if I have no part of joy here below, but still succession of afflictions? The wicked have no part in heaven, and yet they enjoy the earth with pleasure: I would not change portions with them. I rejoice that, seeing I cannot have both, yet I have the better. O Lord, let me pass both my deaths here upon earth: I care not how I live or die, so I may have nothing but life to look for in another world.

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XLV.—The conceit of propriety[a] hardens a man against many inconveniences, and addeth much to our pleasure. The mother abides many unquiet nights, many painful throes, and unpleasant savours of her child, upon this thought, "It is my own." The indulgent father magnifies that in his own son which he would scarce like in a stranger. The want of this to Godward makes us so subject to discontentment, and cooleth our delight in him, because we think of him aloof, as one in whom we are not interested. If we could think, "It is my God that cheereth me with his presence and blessings while I prosper; that afflicteth me in love, when I am dejected: my Saviour is at God's right hand; my angels stand in his presence;" it could not be but God's favour would be sweeter, his chastisements more easy, his benefits more effectual. I am not mine own, while God is not mine; and while he is mine, since I do possess him, I will enjoy him.

XLVI.—Nature is of her own inclination froward, importunately longing after that which is denied her, and scornful of what she may have. If it were appointed that we should live always upon earth, how extremely would we exclaim of weariness, and wish rather that we were not! Now it is appointed we shall live here but a while, and then give room to our successors, each one affects a kind of eternity upon earth. I will labour to tame this peevish and sullen humour of nature, and will like that best that must be.

XLVII.—All true earthly pleasure forsook man when he forsook his Creator. What honest and holy delight he took before, in the dutiful services of the obsequious creatures; in the contemplation of that admirable variety and strangeness of their properties; in seeing their sweet accordance with each other, and all with himself! Now most of our pleasure is, to set one creature together by the ears with another, sporting ourselves only with that deformity which was bred through our own fault. Yea, there have been that have delighted to see one man spill another's blood upon the sand, and have shouted for joy at the sight of that slaughter, which hath fallen out upon no other quarrel but the pleasure of the beholders. I doubt not, but as we solace ourselves in the discord of the inferior creatures, so the evil spirits sport themselves in our dissensions. There are better qualities of the creature, which we pass over without pleasure. In recreations, I will choose those which are of best example and best use, seeking those by which I may not only be the merrier, but the better.

[a] [Property or proprietorship.]

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XLVIII.—There is no want for which a man may not find a remedy in himself. Do I want riches? he that desires but little cannot want much. Do I want friends? if I love God enough, and myself but enough, it matters not. Do I want health? if I want it but a little, and recover, I shall esteem it the more, because I wanted: if I be long sick, and unrecoverably, I shall be the fitter and willinger to die; and my pain is so much less sharp by how much more it lingereth. Do I want maintenance? a little and coarse will content nature: let my mind be no more ambitious than my back and belly; I can hardly complain of too little. Do I want sleep? I am going whither there is no use of sleep: where all rest, and sleep not. Do I want children? many that have them wish they wanted: it is better to be childless than crossed with their miscarriage. Do I want learning? he hath none that saith he hath enough; the next way to get more is to find thou wantest. There is remedy for all wants in ourselves, saving only for want of grace; and that a man cannot so much as see and complain that he wants but from above.

XLIX.—Every virtuous action, like the sun eclipsed, hath a double shadow, according to the divers aspects of the beholders; one of glory, the other of envy: glory follows upon good deserts, envy upon glory. He that is envied may think himself well; for he that envies him thinks him more than well. I know no vice in another whereof a man may make so good and comfortable use to himself. There would be no shadow if there were no light.

L.—In meddling with the faults of friends I have observed many wrongful courses; what for fear, or self-love, or indiscretion. Some I have seen, like unmerciful and covetous chirurgeons, keep the wound raw, which they might have seasonably remedied, for their own gain; others, that have laid healing plaisters to skin it aloft, when there hath been more need of corrosives, to eat out the dead flesh within; others, that have galled and drawn, when there hath been nothing but solid flesh, that hath wanted only filling up; others, that have healed the sore, but left an unsightly scar of discredit behind them. He that would do good this way must have fidelity, courage, discretion, patience: fidelity, not to bear with; courage, to reprove them; discretion, to reprove them well; patience, to abide the leisure of amendment; making much of good beginnings, and putting up many repulses; bearing with many weaknesses; still hoping, still soliciting; as knowing that those who have been long used to fetters cannot but halt a while when they are taken off.

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LI.—God hath made all the world, and yet what a little part of it is his! Divide the world into four parts; but one, and the least, containeth all that is worthy the name of Christendom; the rest overwhelmed with Turkism and Paganism; and of this least part, the greater half, yet holding aright concerning God and their Saviour in some common principles, overthrow the truth in their conclusions, and so leave the lesser part of the least part for God. Yet lower: of those that hold aright concerning Christ, how few are there that do otherwise than fashionably profess him; and of those that do seriously profess him, how few are there that in their lives deny him not, living unworthy of so glorious a calling! Wherein I do not pity God, who will have glory even of those that are not his: I pity miserable men, that do reject their Creator and Redeemer, and themselves in him; and I envy Satan, that he ruleth so large. Since God hath so few, I will be more thankful that he hath vouchsafed me one of his, and be the more zealous of glorifying him, because we have but a few fellows.

LII.—As those that have tasted of some delicate dish find other plain dishes but unpleasant, so it fareth with those which have once tasted of heavenly things; they cannot but contemn the best worldly pleasures. As therefore some dainty guest, knowing there is so pleasant fare to come, I will reserve my appetite for it, and not suffer myself cloyed with the coarse diet of the world.

LIII.—I find many places where God hath used the hand of good angels for the punishment of the wicked; but never could yet find one wherein he employed an evil angel in any direct good to his children: indirect I find many, if not all, through the power of him that brings light out of darkness, and turns their evil to our good. In this choice, God would and must be imitated. From an evil spirit I dare not receive aught, if never so good: I will receive as little as I may from a wicked man: if he were as perfectly evil as the other, I durst receive nothing. I had rather hunger, than wilfully dip my hand in a wicked man's dish.

LIV. We are ready to condemn others for that which is as eminently faulty in ourselves. If one blind man rush upon another in the way, either complains of other's blindness, neither of his own. I have heard those which have had most corrupt lungs complain of the unsavoury breath of others. The reason

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is, because the mind casteth altogether outward, and reflecteth not into itself. Yet it is more shameful to be either ignorant of or favourable to our own imperfections. I will censure others' vices fearfully; my own confidently, because I know them; and those I know not, I will suspect.

LV.—He is a very humble man that thinks not himself better than some others; and he is very mean, whom some others do not account better than themselves: so, that vessel that seemed very small upon the main, seems a tall ship upon the Thames. As there are many better for estate than myself, so there are some worse; and if I were yet worse, yet would there be some lower; and if I were so low, that I accounted myself the worst of all, yet some would account themselves in worse case. A man's opinion is in others; his being is in himself. Let me know myself; let others guess at me. Let others either envy or pity me; I care not, so long as I enjoy myself.

LVI.—He can never wonder enough at God's workmanship that knows not the frame of the world: for he can never else conceive of the hugeness and strange proportion of the creature. And he that knows this, can never wonder more at any thing else. I will learn to know, that I may admire; and by that little I know, I will more wonder at that I know not.

LVII.—There is nothing below but toiling, grieving, wishing, hoping, fearing; and weariness in all these. What fools are we, to be besotted with the love of our own trouble, and to hate our liberty and rest! The love of misery is much worse than misery itself. We must first pray that God would make us wise, before we can wish he would make us happy.

LVIII.—If a man refer all things to himself, nothing seems enough: if all things to God, any measure will content him of earthly things; but in grace he is insatiable. Worldlings serve themselves altogether in God; making religion but to serve their turns, as a colour of their ambition and covetousness. The Christian seeks God only in seeking himself; using all other things but as subordinately to him; not caring whether himself win or lose, so that God may win glory in both. I will not suffer mine eyes and mind to be bounded with these visible things; but still look through these matters at God, which is the utmost scope of them: accounting them only as a thoroughfare to pass by, not as an habitation to rest in.

LIX.—He is wealthy enough that wanteth not; he is great

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enough, that is his own master: he is happy enough, that lives to die well. Other things I will not care for; nor too much for these; save only for the last, which alone can admit of no immoderation.

LX.—A man of extraordinary parts makes himself, by strange and singular behaviour, more admired; which if a man of but common faculty do imitate, he makes himself ridiculous: for that which is construed as natural to the one, is descried to be affected in the other; and there is nothing forced by affectation can be comely. I will ever strive to go in the common road: so, while I am not notable, I shall not be notorious.

LXI.—Gold is the best metal; and, for the purity, not subject to rust, as all others; and yet the best gold hath some dross. I esteem not that man that hath no faults: I like him well that hath but a few, and those not great.

LXII.—Many a man mars a good estate for want of skill to proportion his carriage answerably to his ability. A little sail to a large vessel rids no way, though the wind be fair: a large sail to a little bark drowns it: a topsail to a ship of mean burden, in a rough weather, is dangerous: a low sail, in an easy gale, yields little advantage. This disproportion causeth some to live miserably in a good estate; and some to make a good estate miserable. I will first know what I may do for safety, and then I will try what I can do for speed.

LXIII.—The rich man hath many friends; although, in truth, riches have them, and not the man: as the ass that carried the Egyptian goddess had many bowed knees; yet not to the beast, but to the burden. For separate the riches from the person, and thou shalt see friendship leave the man, and follow that which was ever her object: while he may command, and can either give or control, he hath attendance and proffer of love at all hands; but which of these dares acknowledge him when he is going to prison for debt? Then these wasps, that made such music about this gallipot, show plainly that they came only for the honey that was in it. This is the misery of the wealthy, that they cannot know their friends; whereas those that love the poor man, love him for himself. He that would choose a true friend must search out one that is neither covetous nor ambitious; for such a one loves but himself in thee. And if it be rare to find any not infected with these qualities, the best is, to entertain all, and trust few.

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LXIV.—That which the French proverb hath of sickness is true of all evils: that they come on horseback, and go away on foot. We have oft seen a sudden fall, or one meal's surfeit, hath stuck by many to their graves: whereas pleasures come like oxen, slow and heavily, and go away like post-horses, upon the spur. Sorrows, because they are lingering guests, I will entertain but moderately, knowing that the more they are made of, the longer they will continue: and for pleasures, because they stay not, and do but call to drink at my door, I will use them as passengers, with slight respect. He is his own best friend that makes least of both of them.

LXV.—It is indeed more commendable to give good example than to take it; yet imitation, however in civil matters it be condemned of servility, in Christian practice hath his due praise: and though it be more natural for beginners at their first imitation, that cannot swim without bladders, yet the best proficient shall see ever some higher steps of those that have gone to heaven before him worthy of his tracing. Wherein much caution must be had; that we follow good men, and in good: good men; for if we propound imperfect patterns to ourselves, we shall be constrained first to unlearn those ill habits we have got by their imitation, before we can be capable of good; so, besides the loss of labour, we are farther off from our end: in good; for that a man should be so wedded to any man's person, that he can make no separation from his infirmities, is both absurdly servile and unchristian. He therefore that would follow well must learn to distinguish well betwixt good men and evil; betwixt good men and better; betwixt good qualities and infirmities. Why hath God given me education, not in a desert alone, but in the company of good and virtuous men, but that, by the sight of their good carriage, I should better mine own? Why should we have interest in the vices of men, and not in their virtues? And although precepts be surer, yet a good man's action is according to precept; yea, is a precept itself. The Psalmist compares the law of God to a lantern: good example bears it. It is safe following him that carries the light: if he walk without the light, he shall walk without me.

LXVI.—As there is one common end to all good men, salvation; and one author of it, Christ; so there is but one way to it, doing well and suffering evil. Doing well, methinks, is like the zodiac in the heaven, the highway of the sun, through which it

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daily passeth: suffering evil is like the ecliptic-line, that goes through the midst of it. The rule of doing well, the law of God, is uniform and eternal; and the copies of suffering evil, in all times, agree with the original. No man can either do well or suffer ill without an example. Are we sawn in pieces? so was Isaiah. Are we beheaded? so John Baptist. Crucified? so Peter. Thrown to wild beasts? so Daniel. Into the furnace? so the Three Children. Stoned? so Stephen. Banished? so the beloved disciple. Burnt? so millions of martyrs. Defamed and slandered? what good man ever was not? It were easy to be endless both in torments and sufferers: whereof each hath begun to other, all to us. I may not hope to speed better than the best Christians; I cannot fear to fare worse. It is no matter which way I go, so I come to heaven.

LXVII.—There is nothing, beside life, of this nature, that is diminished by addition. Every moment we live longer than other; and each moment that we live longer is so much taken out of our life. It increaseth and diminisheth only by minutes, and therefore is not perceived: the shorter steps it taketh, the more slily it passeth. Time shall not so steal upon me, that I shall not discern it, and catch it by the forelocks; nor so steal from me, that it shall carry with it no witness of his passage in my proficiency.

LXVIII.—The prodigal man, while he spendeth, is magnified; when he is spent, is pitied; and that is all his recompense for his lavished patrimony. The covetous man is grudged while he lives, and his death is rejoiced at; for when he ends, his riches begin to be goods. He that wisely keeps the mean between both, liveth well and hears well; neither repined at by the needy, nor pitied by greater men. I would so manage these worldly commodities as accounting them mine to dispose, others' to partake of.

LXIX.—A good name (if any earthly thing) is worth seeking, worth striving for: yet to affect a bare name, when we deserve either ill or nothing, is but a proud hypocrisy; and to be puffed up with the wrongful estimation of others' mistaking our worth, is an idle and ridiculous pride. Thou art well spoken of upon no desert: what then? thou hast deceived thy neighbours, they, one another, and all of them have deceived thee; for thou madest them think of thee otherwise than thou art, and they have made thee think of thyself as thou art accounted: the deceit came from thee; the shame will end in thee. I will account no wrong

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greater than for a man to esteem and report me above that I am; not rejoicing in that I am well thought of, but in that I am such as I am esteemed.

LXX.—It was a speech worthy the commendation and frequent remembrance of so divine a bishop as Augustin, which is reported of an aged father in his time; who, when his friends comforted him on his sick-bed, and told him they hoped he should recover, answered, "If I shall not die at all, well; but if ever, why not now?" Surely it is folly, what we must do to do unwillingly. I will never think my soul in a good case so long as I am loath to think of dying; and will make this my comfort, not, I shall yet live longer, but, I shall yet do more good.

LXXI.—Excesses are never alone. Commonly those that have excellent parts have some extremely vicious qualities. Great wits have great errors, and great estates have great cares; whereas mediocrity of gifts or of estate, hath usually but easy inconveniences; else the excellent would not know themselves, and the mean would be too much dejected: now those whom we admire for their faculties, we pity for their infirmities; and those which find themselves but of the ordinary pitch, joy that, as their virtues, so their vices are not eminent: so the highest have a blemished glory, and the mean are contentedly secure. I will magnify the highest, but affect the mean.

LXXII.—The body is the case or sheath of the mind; yet as naturally it hideth it, so it doth also many times discover it: for although the forehead, eyes, and frame of the countenance do sometime belie the disposition of the heart, yet most commonly they give true general verdicts. An angry man's brows are bent together and his eyes sparkle with rage, which when he is well pleased look smooth and cheerfully. Envy hath one look, desire another; sorrow yet another; contentment a fourth, different from all the rest. To show no passion is too stoical; to show all is impotent; to show other than we feel, hypocritical. The face and gesture do but write and make commentaries upon the heart. I will first endeavour so to frame and order that, as not to entertain any passion but what I need not care to have laid open to the world: and therefore will first see that the text be good; then that the gloss be true; and, lastly, that it be sparing. To what end hath God so walled in the heart, if I should let every man's eyes into it by my countenance?

LXXIII.—There is no public action which the world is not

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ready to scan; there is no action so private which the evil spirits are not witnesses of: I will endeavour so to live, as knowing that I am ever in the eyes of mine enemies.

LXXIV.—When we ourselves and all other vices are old, then covetousness alone is young, and at his best age. This vice loves to dwell in an old ruinous cottage; yet that age can have no such honest colour for niggardliness and insatiable desire. A young man might plead the uncertainty of his estate, and doubt of his future need; but an old man sees his set period before him. Since this humour is so necessarily annexed to this age, I will turn it the right way, and nourish it in myself; the older I grow, the more covetous I will be, but of the riches, not of the world I am leaving, but of the world I am entering into. It is good coveting what I may have, and cannot leave behind me.

LXXV.—There is a mutual hatred betwixt a Christian and the world; for on the one side, the love of the world is enmity with God, and God's children cannot but take their Father's part: on the other, *The world hates you, because it hated me first.* But the hatred of the good man to the wicked is not so extreme as that wherewith he is hated: for the Christian hates ever with commiseration, and love of that good he sees in the worst; knowing that the essence of the very devils is good, and that the lewdest man hath some excellent parts of nature, or common graces of the Spirit of God, which he warily singleth out in his affection; but the wicked man hates him for goodness, and therefore finds nothing in himself to moderate his detestation. There can be no better music in mine ear than the discord of the wicked. If he like me, I am afraid he spies some quality in me like to his own. If he saw nothing but goodness, he could not love me and be bad himself. It was a just doubt of Phocion, who, when the people praised him, asked, "What evil have I done?" I will strive to deserve evil of none; but not deserving ill, it shall not grieve me to hear ill of those that are evil. I know no greater argument of goodness, than the hatred of a wicked man.

LXXVI.—A man that comes hungry to his meal feeds heartily on the meat set before him, not regarding the metal or form of the platter wherein it is served; who afterwards, when his stomach is satisfied, begins to play with the dish, or to read sentences on his trencher. Those auditors which can find nothing to do but note elegant words and phrases, or rhetorical colours, or perhaps an ill grace of gesture in a pithy and material speech, argue them-

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selves full ere they came to the feast; and therefore go away with a little pleasure, no profit. In hearing others, my only intention shall be to feed my mind with solid matter: if my ear can get aught by the way, I will not grudge it, but I will not intend it.

LXXVII.—The joy of a Christian in these worldly things is limited, and ever awed with fear of excess, but recompensed abundantly with his spiritual mirth; whereas the worldling gives the reins to the mind, and pours himself out into pleasure, fearing only that he shall not joy enough. He that is but half a Christian lives but miserably, for he neither enjoyeth God nor the world: not God, because he hath not grace enough to make him his own; not the world, because he hath some taste of grace, enough to show him the vanity and sin of his pleasures. So the sound Christian hath his heaven above, the worldling here below, the unsettled Christian no where.

LXXVIII.—Good deeds are very fruitful, and not so much of their nature as of God's blessing, multipliable. We think ten in the hundred extreme and biting usury: God gives us more than an hundred for ten; yea, above the increase of the grain, which we commend most for multiplication: for out of one good action of ours God produceth a thousand, the harvest whereof is perpetual. Even the faithful actions of the old patriarchs, the constant sufferings of ancient martyrs, live still, and do good to all successions of ages by their example: for public actions of virtue, besides that they are presently comfortable to the doers, are also exemplary to others; and as they are more beneficial to others, so are more crowned in us. If good deeds were utterly barren and incommodious, I would seek after them for the conscience of their own goodness: how much more shall I now be encouraged to perform them, for that they are so profitable both to myself and to others, and to me in others! My principal care shall be, that while my soul lives in glory in heaven, my good actions may live upon earth; and that they may be put into the bank and multiply, while my body lies in the grave and consumeth.

LXXIX —A Christian, for the sweet fruit he bears to God and men, is compared to the noblest of all plants, the vine. Now as the most generous vine, if it be not pruned, runs out into many superfluous stems, and grows at last weak and fruitless; so doth the best man, if he be not cut short of his desires, and pruned with afflictions. If it be painful to bleed, it is worse to wither. Let me be pruned, that I may grow, rather than cut up, to burn.

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LXXX.—Those that do but superficially taste of divine knowledge find little sweetness in it, and are ready, for the unpleasant relish, to abhor it; whereas if they would dive deep into the sea, they should find fresh water near to the bottom. That it savours not well at the first is the fault, not of it, but of the distempered palate that tastes it. Good metals and minerals are not found close under the skin of the earth, but below in the bowels of it. No good miner casts away his mattock because he finds a vein of tough clay or a shelf of stone, but still delveth lower, and, passing through many changes of soil, at last comes to his rich treasure. We are too soon discouraged in our spiritual gains. I will still persevere to seek, hardening myself against all difficulty. There is comfort even in seeking hope; and there is joy in hoping good success; and in that success is happiness.

LXXXI.—He that hath any experience in spiritual matters knows that Satan is ever more violent at the last; then raging most furiously when he knows he shall rage but a while. Hence of the first persecutions of the first church, the tenth and the last, under Diocletian and Maximinian, and those other five tyrants, was the bloodiest. Hence this age is the most dissolute, because nearest the conclusion. And as this is his course in the universal assaults of the whole church, so it is the same in his conflicts with every Christian soul. Like a subtle orator, he reserves his strongest force till the shutting up, and therefore miserable is the folly of those men who defer their repentance till then, when their onset shall be most sharp, and they, through pain of body and perplexedness of mind, shall be least able to resist. Those that have long furnished themselves with spiritual munition, find work enough in this extreme brunt of temptation; how then should the careless man, that with the help of all opportunities could not find grace to repent, hope to achieve it at the last gasp against greater force, with less means, more distraction, no leisure? Wise princes use to prepare ten years before for a field of one day: I will every day lay up somewhat for my last. If I win that skirmish, I have enough. The first and second blow begin the battle, but the last only wins it.

LXXXII.—I observe three seasons wherein a wise man differs not from a fool; in his infancy, in sleep, and in silence; for in the two former we are all fools; and in silence, all are wise. In the two former yet, there may be concealment of folly, but the tongue is a blab; there cannot be any kind of folly, either simple or

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wicked in the heart, but the tongue will bewray it. He cannot be wise that speaks much, or without sense, or out of season; nor he known for a fool that says nothing. It is a great misery to be a fool, but this is yet greater, that a man cannot be a fool but he must show it. It were well for such a one if he could be taught to keep close his foolishness, but then there should be no fools. I have heard some, which have scorned the opinion of folly in themselves, for a speech wherein they have hoped to show most wit censured of folly by him that hath thought himself wiser; and another hearing his sentence again, hath condemned him for want of wit in censuring. Surely he is not a fool that hath unwise thoughts, but he that utters them. Even concealed folly is wisdom; and sometimes wisdom uttered is folly. While others care how to speak, my care shall be how to hold my peace.

LXXXIII.—A work is then only good and acceptable when the action, meaning, and manner are all good; for to do good with an ill meaning, as Judas saluted Christ to betray him, is so much more sinful by how much the action is better; which, being good in the kind, is abused to an ill purpose. To do ill in a good meaning, as Uzzah, in staying the ark, is so much amiss, that the good intention cannot bear out the unlawful act: which although it may seem some excuse why it should not be so ill, yet is no warrant to justify it. To mean well and do a good action in an ill manner, as the Pharisee made a good prayer but arrogantly, is so offensive, that the evil manner depraveth both the other. So a thing may be evil upon one circumstance; it cannot be good but upon all. In whatever business I go about, I will inquire, what I do, for the substance; how, for the manner; why, for the intention: for the two first, I will consult with God; for the last, with my own heart.

LXXXIV.—I can do nothing without a million of witnesses: the conscience is as a thousand witnesses; and God is as a thousand consciences; I will therefore so deal with men, as knowing that God sees me; and so with God, as if the world saw me; so with myself, and both of them, as knowing that my conscience seeth me; and so with them all, as knowing I am always overlooked by my accuser, by my Judge.

LXXXV.—Earthly inheritances are divided ofttimes with much inequality. The privilege of primogeniture stretcheth larger in many places now than it did among the ancient Jews. The younger many times serves the elder; and while the eldest

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aboundeth, all the latter issue is pinched. In heaven it is not so: all the sons of God are heirs, none underlings; and not heirs under wardship and hope, but inheritors; and not inheritors of any little pittance of land, but of a kingdom; nor of an earthly kingdom, subject to danger of loss or alteration, but one glorious and everlasting. It shall content me here, that having right to all things, yet I have possession of nothing but sorrow. Since I shall have possession above, of all that whereto I have right below, I will serve willingly, that I may reign; serve for a while, that I may reign for ever.

LXXXVI.—Even the best things, ill used, become evils; and contrarily, the worst things, used well, prove good. A good tongue, used to deceit; a good wit, used to defend error; a strong arm, to murder; authority, to oppress; a good profession, to dissemble, are all evil; yea, God's own word is *the sword of the Spirit*, which, if it kill not our vices, kills our souls. Contrariwise, as poisons are used to wholesome medicine, afflictions and sins by a good use prove so gainful as nothing more. Words are as they are taken, and things are as they are used. There are even cursed blessings. O Lord, rather give me no favours than not grace to use them. If I want them, thou requirest not what thou dost not give; but if I have them, and want their use, thy mercy proves my judgment.

LXXXVII.—Man is the best of all these inferior creatures, yet lives in more sorrow and discontentment than the worst of them; while that reason, wherein he excels them and by which he might make advantage of his life, he abuses to a suspicious distrust. How many hast thou found of the fowls of the air lying dead in the way for want of provision? They eat and rest and sing, and want nothing. Man, which hath far better means to live comfortably, toileth and careth and wanteth; whom yet his reason alone might teach, that he, which careth for these lower creatures, made only for man, will much more provide for man to whose use they were made. There is an holy carelessness, free from idleness, free from distrust. In these earthly things I will so depend on my Maker, that my trust in him may not exclude all my labour; and yet so labour, upon my confidence on him, as my endeavour may be void of perplexity.

LXXXVIII.—The precepts and practice of those with whom we live avail much on either part. For a man not to be ill, where he hath no provocations to evil, is less commendable; but for a

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man to live continently in Asia (as he said), where he sees nothing but allurements to uncleanness; for Lot to be a good man in the midst of Sodom, to be abstemious in Germany, and in Italy chaste, this is truly praiseworthy. To sequester ourselves from the company of the world, that we may depart from their vices, proceeds from a base and distrusting mind: as if we would so force goodness upon ourselves, that therefore only we would be good because we cannot be ill: but for a man so to be personally and locally in the throng of the world, as to withdraw his affections from it; to use it, and yet to contemn it at once; to compel it to his service, without any infection, becomes well the noble courage of a Christian. The world shall be mine, I will not be his; and yet so mine, that his evil shall be still his own.

LXXXIX.—He that lives in God cannot be weary of his life, because he ever finds both somewhat to do and somewhat to solace himself with: cannot be over-loath to part with it, because he shall enter into a nearer life and society with that God in whom he delighteth. Whereas, he that lives without him, lives many times uncomfortably here, because partly he knows not any cause of joy in himself, and partly he finds not any worthy employment to while himself withal: dies miserably, because he either knows not whither he goes, or knows he goes to torment. There is no true life but the life of faith. O Lord, let me live out of the world with thee, if thou wilt; but let me not live in the world without thee.

XC.—Sin is both evil in itself, and the effect of a former evil, and the cause of sin following; a cause of punishment; and lastly, a punishment itself. It is a damnable iniquity in Man, to multiply one sin upon another; but to punish one sin by another, in God is a judgment both most just and most fearful; so as all the storehouse of God hath not a greater vengeance: with other punishments, the body smarteth; the soul, with this. I care not how God offends me with punishments, so he punish me not with offending him.

XCI.—I have seen some afflict their bodies with wilful famine, and scourges of their own making. God spares me that labour: for he whips me daily with the scourge of a weak body, and sometimes with ill tongues. He holds me short, many times, of the feeling of his comfortable presence; which is in truth so much more miserable an hunger than that of the body, by how much the soul is more tender, and the food denied more excel-

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lent. He is my Father; infinitely wise, to proportion out my correction according to my estate; and infinitely loving, in fitting me with a due measure. He is a presumptuous child, that will make choice of his own rod. Let me learn to make a right use of his corrections, and I shall not need to correct myself. And if it should please God to remit his hand a little, I will govern my body as a master, not as a tyrant.

XCII.—If God had not said, *Blessed are those that hunger*, I know not what could keep weak Christians from sinking in despair. Many times all I can do is, to find and complain that I want him, and wish to recover him: now this is my stay, that he in mercy esteems us, not only by having, but by desiring also; and after a sort, accounts us to have that which we want and desire to have: and my soul assuming, tells me I do unfeignedly wish him and long after that grace I miss. Let me desire still more, and I know I shall not desire always. There was never soul miscarried with longing after grace. O blessed hunger, that ends always in fulness! I am sorry that I can but hunger, and yet I would not be full, for the blessing is promised to the hungry. Give me more, Lord, but so as I may hunger more. Let me hunger more, and I know I shall be satisfied.

XCIII.—There is more in the Christian than thou seest; for he is both an entire body of himself, and he is a limb of another more excellent, even that glorious mystical body of his Saviour: to whom he is so united, that the actions of either are reciprocally referred to each other. For on the one side the Christian lives in Christ, dies in Christ, in Christ fulfils the law, possesseth heaven; on the other, Christ is persecuted by Paul in his members, and is persecuted in Paul afterwards by others; he suffers in us, he lives in us, he works in and by us: so thou canst not do either good or harm to a Christian, but thou dost it to his Redeemer, to whom he is invisibly united. Thou seest him as a man, and therefore worthy of favour for humanity's sake; thou seest him not as a Christian, worthy of honour, for his secret and yet true union with our Saviour. I will love every Christian, for that I see; honour him, for that I shall see.

XCIV.—Hell itself is scarce a more obscure dungeon in comparison of the earth, than earth is in respect of heaven. Here, the most see nothing, and the best see little; here, half our life is night, and our very day is darkness in respect of God. The true Light of the world, and the Father of lights, dwelleth above: there

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is the light of knowledge to inform us, and the light of joy to comfort us, without all change of darkness. There was never any captive loved his dungeon, and complained when he must be brought out to light and liberty. Whence then is this natural madness in us men, that we delight so much in this unclean, noisome, dark, and comfortless prison of earth, and think not of our release to that lightsome and glorious paradise above us, without grief and repining? We are sure that we are not perfectly well here: if we could be as sure that we should be better above, we would not fear changing. Certainly our sense tells us we have some pleasure here; and we have not faith to assure us of more pleasure above: and hence we settle ourselves to the present, with neglect of the future, though infinitely more excellent. The heart follows the eyes; and unknown good is uncared for. O Lord, do thou break through this darkness of ignorance and faithlessness wherewith I am compassed. Let me but see my heaven, and I know I shall desire it.

XCV.—To be carried away with an affectation of fame is so vain and absurd, that I wonder it can be incident to any wise man; for what a molehill of earth is it to which his name can extend, when it is farthest carried by the wings of report! And how short a while doth it continue where it is once spread! Time, the devourer of his own brood, consumes both us and our memories: not brass, nor marble can bear age. How many flattering poets have promised immortality of name to their princes, who now together are buried long since in forgetfulness! Those names and actions that are once on the file of heaven are past the danger of defacing. I will not care whether I be known or remembered or forgotten amongst men, if my name and good actions may live with God in the records of eternity.

XCVI.—There is no man nor no place free from spirits, although they testify their presence by visible effects but in few. Every man is an host to entertain angels, though not in visible shapes, as Abraham and Lot. The evil ones do nothing but provoke us to sin, and plot mischiefs against us, by casting into our way dangerous objects; by suggesting sinful motions to our minds; stirring up enemies against us amongst men; by frighting us with terrors in ourselves; by accusing us to God: on the contrary, the good angels are ever removing our hinderances from good, and our occasions of evil; mitigating our temptations; helping us against our enemies; delivering us from dangers; comforting us in

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sorrows; furthering our good purposes; and at last carrying up our souls to heaven. It would affright a weak Christian, that knows the power and malice of wicked spirits, to consider their presence and number; but when, with the eyes of Elisha's servant, he sees those on his side as present, as diligent, more powerful, he cannot but take heart again; especially if he consider, that neither of them is without God: limiting the one, the bounds of their temptation; directing the other, in the safeguard of his children. Whereupon it is come to pass, that though there be many legions of devils, and every one more strong than many legions of men, and more malicious than strong, yet the little flock of God's Church liveth and prospereth. I have ever with me invisible friends and enemies. The consideration of mine enemies shall keep me from security, and make me fearful of doing aught to advantage them. The consideration of my spiritual friends shall comfort me against the terror of the other, shall remedy my solitariness, shall make me wary of doing aught indecently: grieving me rather, that I have ever heretofore made them turn away their eyes for shame of that whereof I have not been ashamed; that I have no more enjoyed their society; that I have been no more affected with their presence. What though I see them not? I believe them. I were no Christian, if my faith were not as sure as my sense.

XCVII.—There is no word or action but may be taken with two hands, either with the right hand of charitable construction, or the sinister interpretation of malice and suspicion: and all things do so succeed as they are taken. I have noted evil actions, well taken, pass current for either indifferent or commendable; contrarily, a good speech or action, ill taken, scarce allowed for indifferent; an indifferent one, censured for evil; an evil one, for notorious: so, favour makes virtues of vices; and suspicion makes virtues faults, and faults crimes. Of the two, I had rather my right hand should offend. It is always safer offending on the better part. To construe an evil act well, is but a pleasing and profitable deceit of myself; but to misconstrue a good thing, is a treble wrong; to myself, the action, the author. If no good sense can be made of a deed or speech, let the blame light upon the author: if a good interpretation may be given, and I choose a worse, let me be as much censured of others, as that misconceit is punishment to myself.

XCVIII.—I know not how it comes to pass, that the mind of

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Man doth naturally both overprize his own, in comparison of others; and yet contemn and neglect his own, in comparison of what he wants. The remedy of this latter evil is, to compare the good things we have with the evils which we have not, and others groan under. Thou art in health, and regardest it not: look on the misery of those which, on their bed of sickness, through extremity of pain and anguish, entreat death to release them. Thou hast clear eyesight, sound limbs, use of reason; and passest these over with slight respect: think how many there are, which, in their uncomfortable blindness, would give all the world for but one glimpse of light; how many, that deformedly crawl on all-four, after the manner of the most loathsome creatures: how many, that in mad frenzies are worse than brutish, worse than dead: thus thou mightest be, and art not. If I be not happy for the good that I have, I am yet happy for the evil that I might have had, and have escaped. I have deserved the greatest evil: every evil that I miss is a new mercy.

XCIX.—Earth, which is the basest element, is both our mother, that brought us forth; our stage, that bears us alive; and our grave, wherein, at last, we are entombed: giving to us both our original, our harbour, our sepulchre. She hath yielded her back to bear thousands of generations; and at last opened her mouth to receive them; so swallowing them up, that she still both beareth more and looks for more; not bewraying any change in herself, while she so oft hath changed her brood and her burden. It is a wonder we can be proud of our parentage or of ourselves, while we see both the baseness and stability of the earth whence we came. What difference is there? Living earth treads upon the dead earth, which afterwards descends into the grave, as senseless and dead as the earth that receives it. Not many are proud of their souls; and none but fools can be proud of their bodies. While we walk and look upon the earth, we cannot but acknowledge sensible admonitions of humility; and, while we remember them, we cannot forget ourselves. It is a mother-like favour of the earth, that she bears and nourishes me; and at the last entertains my dead carcass; but it is a greater pleasure that she teaches me my vileness by her own, and sends me to heaven for what she wants.

C.—The wicked man carrieth every day a brand to his hell, till his heap be come to the height; then he ceaseth sinning, and

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begins his torment: whereas the repentant, in every fit of holy sorrow, carries away a whole fagot from the flame, and quencheth the coals that remain with his tears. There is no torment for the penitent; no redemption for the obstinate. Safety consisteth not in not sinning, but in repenting: neither is it sin that condemns, but impenitence. O Lord, I cannot be righteous; let me be repentant.

CI.[a]—The estate of heavenly and earthly things is plainly represented to us by the two lights of heaven, which are appointed to rule the night and the day. Earthly things are rightly resembled by the Moon, which, being nearest to the region of mortality, is ever in changes, and never looks upon us twice with the same face; and, when it is at the full, is blemished with some dark blots, not capable of any illumination. Heavenly things are figured by the Sun, whose great and glorious light is both natural to itself, and ever constant. That other fickle and dim star is fit enough for the night of misery, wherein we live here below. And this firm and beautiful light is but good enough for that day of glory which the saints live in. If it be good living here, where our sorrows are changed with joys; what is it to live above, where our joys change not? I cannot look upon the body of the Sun; and yet I cannot see at all without the light of it: I cannot behold the glory of thy saints, O Lord; yet without the knowledge of it I am blind. If thy creature be so glorious to us here below, how glorious shall thyself be to us when we are above the sun! This sun shall not shine upward, where thy glory shineth: the greater light extinguisheth the lesser. O thou Sun of Righteousness, which shalt only shine to me when I am glorified, do thou heat, enlighten, comfort me with the beams of thy presence, till I be glorified. Amen.

[a] The author seems, by oversight, to have introduced a paragraph too many in this century. One edition, in consequence, gives the No. 86. twice; another repeats the No. 95; and a third the No. 97: but I have thought it best to number the paragraphs regularly through to the end. PRATT.

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HOLY OBSERVATIONS.

ONE BOOK.

BY JOS. HALL.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDWARD, LORD DENNY,

BARON OF WALTHAM,

MY MOST BOUNTIFUL PATRON,

GRACE AND PEACE.

RIGHT HONOURABLE:—This advantage a scholar hath above others, that he cannot be idle; and that he can work without instruments: for the mind inured to contemplation, will set itself on work, when other occasions fail; and hath no more power not to study than the eye, which is open, hath not to see something: in which business it carries about his own library; neither can complain to want books while it enjoyeth itself.

I could not then neglect the commodity of this plentiful leisure, in my so easy attendance here: but, though besides my course, and without the help of others' writings, must needs busy myself in such thoughts, as I have here given account of to your Lordship: such, as I hope shall not be unprofitable, nor unwelcome to their patron, to their readers. I send them forth from hence under your honourable name; to show you, that no absence, no employment can make me forget my due respect to your Lordship: to whom, next under my gracious Master, I have deservedly bequeathed myself and my endeavours. Your goodness hath not wont to magnify itself more in giving than in receiving such like holy presents: the knowledge whereof hath entitled you to more labours of this nature, if I have numbered aright, than any of your peers. I misdoubt not, either your acceptation or their use. That God, who hath above all his other favours given your Lordship, even in these careless times, an heart truly religious, give you an happy increase of all his heavenly graces by my unworthy service! To his gracious care I daily commend your Lordship, with my honourable lady; wishing you both all that little joy earth can afford you, and fulness of glory above.

Your Lordship's most humbly devoted for ever,

In all duty and observance,

JOS. HALL.

Non-such, July 3.

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HOLY OBSERVATIONS.

I.—As there is nothing sooner dry than a tear, so there is nothing sooner out of season than worldly sorrow; which, if it be fresh, and still bleeding, finds some to comfort and pity it; if stale, and skinned over with time, is rather entertained with smiles than commiseration; but the sorrow of repentance comes never out of time. All times are alike unto that eternity whereto we make our spiritual moans: that which is past, that which is future, are both present with him. It is neither weak nor uncomely for an old man to weep for the sins of his youth. Those tears can never be shed either too soon or too late.

II.—Some men live to be their own executors for their good name; which they see (not honestly) buried, before themselves die: some other, of great place and ill desert, part with their good name and breath at once: there is scarce a vicious man, whose name is not rotten before his carcass. Contrarily, the good man's name is ofttimes heir to his life: either born after the death of the parent, for that envy would not suffer it to come forth before, or perhaps so well grown up in his lifetime, that the hope thereof is the staff of his age and joy of his death. A wicked man's name may be feared a while; soon after it is either forgotten or cursed. The good man either sleepeth with his body in peace, or waketh (as his soul) in glory.

III.—Ofttimes those which show much valour while there is equal possibility of life, when they see a present necessity of death are found most shamefully timorous. Their courage was before grounded upon hope; that cut off, leaves them at once desperate and cowardly: whereas men of feebler spirits meet more cheerfully with death, because, though their courage be less, yet their expectation was more.

IV.—I have seldom seen the son of an excellent and famous man excellent; but that an ill bird hath an ill egg is not rare, children possessing, as the bodily diseases, so the vices of their parents. Virtue is not propagated; vice is, even in them which have it not reigning in themselves. The grain is sown pure,

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but comes up with chaff and husk. Hast thou a good son? he is God's, not thine. Is he evil? nothing but his sin is thine. Help, by thy prayers and endeavours, to take away that which thou hast given him, and to obtain from God that which thou hast, and canst not give; else thou mayest name him a possession, but thou shalt find him a loss.

V.—These things be comely and pleasant to see, and worthy of honour from the beholder: a young saint; an old martyr; a religious soldier; a conscionable statesman; a great man courteous; a learned man humble; a silent woman; a child understanding the eye of his parent; a merry companion, without vanity; a friend not changed with honour; a sick man cheerful; a soul departing with comfort and assurance.

VI.—I have oft observed, in merry meetings solemnly made, that somewhat hath fallen out cross, either in the time or immediately upon it, to season, as I think, our immoderation in desiring or enjoying our friends: and again, events suspected have proved ever best; God herein blessing our awful submission with good success. In all these human things indifferency is safe. Let thy doubts be ever equal to thy desires; so thy disappointment shall not be grievous, because thy expectation was not peremptory.

VII.—You shall rarely find a man eminent in sundry faculties of mind, or sundry manuary trades. If his memory be excellent, his fantasy is but dull; if his fancy be busy and quick, his judgment is but shallow; if his judgment be deep, his utterance is harsh. Which also holds no less in the activities of the hand. And if it happen that one man be qualified with skill of divers trades, and practise this variety, you shall seldom find such one thriving in his estate. With spiritual gifts it is otherwise; which are so chained together, that who excels in one hath some eminency in more, yea, in all. Look upon faith; she is attended with a bevy of graces: he that believes cannot but have hope; if hope, patience: he that believes and hopes must needs find joy in God; if joy, love of God: he that loves God cannot but love his brother: his love to God breeds piety and care to please, sorrow for offending, fear to offend; his love to men, fidelity and Christian beneficence. Vices are seldom single, but virtues go ever in troops; they go so thick, that sometimes some are hid in the crowd; which yet are, but appear not. They may be shut out from sight: they cannot be severed.

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VIII.—The heaven ever moves, and yet is the place of our rest. Earth ever rests, and yet is the place of our trouble. Outward motion can be no enemy to inward rest, as outward rest may well stand with inward unquietness.

IX.—None live so ill but they content themselves in somewhat. Even the beggar likes the smell of his dish. It is a rare evil that hath not something to sweeten it, either in sense or in hope; otherwise men would grow desperate, mutinous, envious of others, weary of themselves. The better that thing is wherein we place our comfort, the happier we live; and the more we love good things the better they are to us. The worldling's comfort, though it be good to him because he loves it, yet because it is not absolutely and eternally good, it fails him; wherein the Christian hath just advantage of him, while he hath all the same causes of joy refined and exalted; besides more and higher, which the other knows not of. The worldling laughs more, but the Christian is more delighted. These two are easily severed. Thou seest a goodly picture or an heap of thy gold, thou laughest not, yet thy delight is more than in a jest that shaketh thy spleen. As grief, so joy, is not less when it is least expressed.

X.—I have seen the worst natures and most depraved minds not affecting all sins; but still, some they have condemned in others and abhorred in themselves. One exclaims on covetousness, yet he can too well abide riotous good fellowship; another inveighs against drunkenness and excess, not caring how cruel he be in usury and oppression. One cannot endure a rough and quarrellous disposition, yet gives himself over to unclean and lascivious courses; another hates all wrongs, save wrong to God. One is a civil atheist; another, a religious usurer; a third, an honest drunkard; a fourth, an unchaste justicer; a fifth, a chaste quarreller. I know not whether every devil excel in all sins: I am sure some of them have denomination from some sins more special. Let no man applaud himself for those sins he wanteth, but condemn himself rather for that sin he hath. Thou censurest another man's sin; he thine; God curseth both.

XI.—Gold is the heaviest of all metals, it is no wonder that the rich man is usually carried downward to his place. It is hard for the soul, clogged with many weights, to ascend to heaven. It must be a strong and nimble soul that can carry up itself and such a load yet Adam and Noah flew up thither with the double monarchy

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of the world; the patriarchs, with much wealth; many holy kings, with massy crowns and sceptres. The burden of covetous desires is more heavy to an empty soul than much treasure to the full. Our affections give poise or lightness to earthly things. Either abate of thy load if thou find it too pressing; whether by having less or loving less; or add to thy strength and activity that thou mayest yet ascend. It is more commendable, by how much more hard, to climb into heaven with a burden.

XII.—A Christian, in all his ways, must have three guides, truth, charity, wisdom: truth to go before him, charity and wisdom on either hand. If any of the three be absent he walks amiss. I have seen some do hurt by following a truth uncharitably; and others, while they would salve up an error with love, have failed in their wisdom and offended against justice. A charitable untruth, and an uncharitable truth, an unwise managing of truth or love, are all to be carefully avoided of him that would go with a right foot in the narrow way.

XIII.—God brought man forth at first, not into a wilderness, but a garden, yet then he expected the best service of him. I never find that he delights in the misery, but in the prosperity of his servants. Cheerfulness pleases him better than a dejected and dull heaviness of heart. If we can be good with pleasure, he grudgeth not our joy; if not, it is best to stint ourselves, not for that these comforts are not good, but because our hearts are evil; faulting not their nature, but our use and corruption.

XIV.—The homeliest service that we do in an honest calling, though it be but to plough or dig, if done in obedience and conscience of God's commandment, is crowned with an ample reward; whereas the best works for their kind, (preaching, praying, offering evangelical sacrifices,) if without respect of God's injunction and glory, are loaded with curses. God loveth adverbs, and cares not how good, but how well.

XV.—The golden infancy of some hath proceeded to a brazen youth, and ended in a leaden age. All human maturities have their period; only grace hath none. I durst never lay too much hope on the forward beginnings of wit and memory which have been applauded in children: I knew they could but attain their vigour, and that if sooner, no whit the better; for the earlier is their perfection of wisdom, the longer shall be their witless age. Seasonableness is the best in all these things, which have their

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ripeness and decay. We can never hope too much of the timely blossoms of grace, whose spring is perpetual, and whose harvest begins with our end.

XVI.—A man must give thanks for somewhat which he may not pray for. It hath been said of courtiers, that they must receive injuries and give thanks. God cannot wrong his, but he will cross them; those crosses are beneficial; all benefits challenge thanks; yet I have read that God's children have, with condition, prayed against them, never for them. In good things we pray both for them and their good use; in evil, for their good use, not themselves: yet we must give thanks for both. For there is no evil of pain which God doth not; nothing that God doth is not good; no good thing but is worthy of thanks.

XVII.—One half of the world knows not how the other lives; and therefore the better sort pity not the distressed, and the miserable envy not those which fare better, because they know it not. Each man judges of others' conditions by his own. The worst sort would be too much discontented if they saw how far more pleasant the life of others is; and if the better sort, such we call those which are greater, could look down to the infinite miseries of inferiors, it would make them either miserable in compassion or proud in conceit. It is good sometimes for the delicate rich man to look into the poor man's cupboard; and, seeing God in mercy gives him not to know their sorrow by experience, to know it yet in speculation: this shall teach him more thanks to God, more mercy to men, more contentment in himself.

XVIII.—Such as a man's prayer is for another, it shall be, in time of his extremity, for himself: for though he love himself more than others, yet his apprehension of God is alike for both. Such as his prayer is in a former extremity, it shall be also in death: this way we may have experience even of a thing future: if God have been far off from thee in a fit of thine ordinary sickness, fear lest he will not be nearer thee in thy last: what differs that from this, but in time? Correct thy dulness upon former proofs; or else at last thy devotion shall want life before thy body.

XIX.—Those that come to their meat as to a medicine, as Augustin reports of himself, live in an austere and Christian temper, and shall be sure not to joy too much in the creature, nor to abuse themselves: those that come to their medicine as to meat, shall be sure to live miserably and die soon. To come to meat, if

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without a gluttonous appetite and palate, is allowed to Christians: to come to meat as to a sacrifice unto the belly, is a most base and brutish idolatry.

XX.—The worst that ever were, even Cain and Judas, have had some fautors that have honoured them for saints; and the serpent that beguiled our first parents, hath, in that name, had divine honour and thanks. Never any man trod so perilous and deep steps, but some have followed and admired him. Each master of heresy hath found some clients, even he that taught all men's opinions were true. Again, no man hath been so exquisite, but some have detracted from him, even in those qualities which have seemed most worthy of wonder to others. A man shall be sure to be backed by some either in good or evil, and by some shouldered in both. It is good for a man not to stand upon his abettors, but his quarrel; and not to depend upon others, but himself.

XXI.—We see thousands of creatures die for our use, and never do so much as pity them: why do we think much to die once for God? They are not ours so much as we are his, nor our pleasure so much to us as his glory to him: their lives are lost to us, ours but changed to him.

XXII.—Much ornament is no good sign: painting of the face argues an ill complexion of body, a worse mind. Truth hath a face both honest and comely, and looks best in her own colours. But above all, divine truth is most fair; and most scorneth to borrow beauty of man's wit or tongue: she loveth to come forth in her native grace like a princely matron, and counts it the greatest indignity to be dallied with as a wanton strumpet: she looks to command reverence, not pleasure: she would be kneeled to, not laughed at. To prank her up in vain dresses and fashions, or to sport with her in a light and youthful manner, is most abhorring from her nature: they know her not that give her such entertainment, and shall first know her angry when they do know her. Again, she would be plain, but not base, not sluttish: she would be clad, not garishly, yet not in rags: she likes as little to be set out by a base foil as to be seen credited with gay colours. It is no small wisdom to know her just guise, but more to follow it; and so to keep the mean, that while we please her, we discontent not the beholders.

XXIII.—In worldly carriage, so much is a man made of as he takes upon himself; but such is God's blessing upon true humility, that it still procureth reverence. I never saw Christian

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less honoured for a wise neglect of himself. If our dejection proceed from the conscience of our want, it is possible we should be as little esteemed of others as of ourselves; but if we have true graces, and prize them not at the highest, others shall value both them in us, and us for them, and, with usury, give us that honour we withheld modestly from ourselves.

XXIV.—He that takes his full liberty in what he may shall repent him; how much more in what he should not! I never read of Christian that repented him of too little worldly delight. The surest course I have still found in all earthly pleasures, to rise with an appetite, and to be satisfied with a little.

XXV.—There is a time when kings go not forth to warfare: our spiritual war admits no intermission; it knows no night, no winter, abides no peace, no truce. This calls us not into garrison, where we may have ease and respite, but into pitched fields continually: we see our enemies in the face always, and are always seen and assaulted; ever resisting, ever defending; receiving and returning blows. If either we be negligent or weary, we die: what other hope is there while one fights and the other stands still? We can never have safety and peace but in victory. There must our resistance be courageous and constant, where both yielding is death, and all treaties of peace mortal.

XXVI.—Neutrality in things good or evil is both odious and prejudicial; but in matters of an indifferent nature is safe and commendable. Herein taking of parts maketh sides, and breaketh unity. In an unjust cause of separation, he that favoureth both parts may perhaps have least love of either side, but hath most charity in himself.

XXVII.—Nothing is more absurd than that epicurean resolution, *Let us eat and drink, to-morrow we shall die;* as if we were made only for the paunch, and lived that we might live; yet there was never any natural man found savour in that meat which he knew should be his last: whereas they should say, "Let us fast and pray, to-morrow we shall die;" for to what purpose is the body strengthened, that it may perish, whose greater strength makes our death more violent? No man bestows a costly roof on a ruinous tenement: that man's end is easy and happy whom death finds with a weak body and a strong soul.

XXVIII.—Sometime, even things in themselves naturally good are to be refused for those, which, being evil, may be an occasion to a greater good. Life is in itself good, and death evil: else

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David, Elias, and many excellent martyrs, would not have fled, to hold life and avoid death; nor Hezekiah have prayed for it, nor our Saviour have bidden us to flee for it, nor God promised it to his for a reward: yet if, in some cases, we hate not life, we love not God nor our souls. Herein, as much as in any thing, the perverseness of our nature appears, that we wish death or love life upon wrong causes: we would live for pleasure, or we would die for pain. Job for his sores, Elias for his persecution, Jonah for his gourd, would presently die, and will needs outface God that it is better for him to die than to live: wherein we are like to garrison soldiers, that while they live within safe walls, and show themselves once a day rather for ceremony and pomp, than need or danger, like warfare well enough; but if once called forth to the field, they wish themselves at home.

XXIX.—Not only the least, but the worst is ever in the bottom. What should God do with the dregs of our age? When sin will admit thee his client no longer, then God shall be beholden to thee for thy service. Thus is God dealt with in all other offerings: the worst and least sheaf must be God's tenth; the deformedest or simplest of our children must be God's ministers; the uncleanliest and most careless house must be God's temple; the idlest and sleepiest hours of the day must be reserved for our prayers; the worst part of our age for devotion. We would have God give us still of the best, and are ready to murmur at every little evil he sends us; yet nothing is bad enough for him, of whom we receive all. Nature condemns this inequality, and tells us, that he which is the Author of good should have the best, and he which gives all should have his choice.

XXX.—When we go about an evil business, it is strange how ready the devil is to set us forward; how careful that we should want no furtherances: so that if a man would be lewdly witty, he shall be sure to be furnished with store of profane jests; wherein a loose heart hath double advantage of the conscionable: if he would be voluptuous, he shall want neither objects nor opportunities. The current passage of ill enterprises is so far from giving cause of encouragement, that it should justly fright a man to look back to the author, and to consider that he therefore goes fast because the devil drives him.

XXXI.—In the choice of companions for our conversation, it is good dealing with men of good natures; for though grace exerciseth her power in bridling nature, yet, since we are still men at

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the best, some swinge she will have in the most mortified. Austerity, sullenness, or strangeness of disposition, and whatsoever qualities may make a man unsociable, cleave faster to our nature than those which are morally evil. True Christian love may be separated from acquaintance, and acquaintance from entireness: these are not qualities to hinder our love, but our familiarity.

XXXII.—Ignorance, as it makes bold, intruding men carelessly into unknown dangers; so also it makes men ofttimes causelessly fearful. Herod feared Christ's coming, because he mistook it: if that tyrant had known the manner of his spiritual regiment, he had spared both his own fright and the blood of other. And hence it is that we fear death, because we are not acquainted with the virtue of it. Nothing but innocency and knowledge can give sound confidence to the heart.

XXXIII.—Where are divers opinions, they may be all false: there can be but one true; and that one truth ofttimes must be fetched by piecemeal out of divers branches of contrary opinions. For it falls out not seldom, that truth is, through ignorance or rash vehemency, scattered into sundry parts, and like to a little silver melted amongst the ruins of a burnt house, must be tried out from heaps of much superfluous ashes. There is much pains in the search of it; much skill in finding it: the value of it, once found, requites the cost of both.

XXXIV.—Affectation of superfluity is in all things a sign of weakness: as in words, he that useth circumlocutions to express himself, shows want of memory and want of proper speech; and much talk argues a brain feeble and distempered. What good can any earthly thing yield us beside his use? and what is it but vanity, to affect that which doth us no good; and what use is in that which is superfluous? It is a great skill to know what is enough, and great wisdom to care for no more.

XXXV.—Good things, which in absence were desired, now offering themselves to our presence, are scarce entertained, or at least not with our purposed cheerfulness. Christ's coming to us, and our going to him, are in our profession well esteemed, much wished; but when he singleth us out by a direct message of death, or by some fearful sign giveth likelihood of a present return, we are as much affected with fear as before with desire. All changes, although to the better, are troublesome for the time, until our settling. There is no remedy hereof but inward prevention; our mind must change before our estate be changed.

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XXXVI.—Those are greatest enemies to religion that are not most irreligious. Atheists, though in themselves they be the worst, yet are seldom found hot persecutors of others; whereas those which in some one fundamental point be heretical are commonly most violent in oppositions. One hurts by secret infection, the other by open resistance; one is careless of all truth, the other, vehement for some untruth. An atheist is worthy of more hatred: an heretic, of more fear; both, of avoidance.

XXXVII.—Ways, if never used, cannot but be fair; if much used, are made commodiously passable; if before oft used and now seldom, they become deep and dangerous. If the heart be not at all inured to meditation, it findeth no fault with itself; not for that it is innocent, but secure: if often, it findeth comfortable passage for his thoughts; if rarely, and with intermission, tedious and troublesome. In things of this nature we only escape complaint if we use them either always or never.

XXXVIII.—Our sensual hand holds fast whatsoever delight it apprehendeth; our spiritual hand easily remitteth, because appetite is stronger in us than grace: whence it is, that we so hardly deliver ourselves of earthly pleasures which we have once entertained; and with such difficulty draw ourselves to a constant course of faith, hope, and spiritual joy, or to the renewed acts of them once intermitted. Age is naturally weak, and youth vigourous; but in us, the old man is strong, the new, faint and feeble; the fault is not in grace, but in us; faith doth not want strength, but we want faith.

XXXIX.—It is not good in worldly estates for a man to make himself necessary, for hereupon he is both more toiled and more suspected; but in the sacred commonwealth of the Church, a man cannot be engaged too deeply by his service. The ambition of spiritual well-doing breeds no danger. He that doth best, and may worst be spared, is happiest.

XL.—It was a fit comparison of worldly cares, to thorns; for as they choke the word, so they prick our souls; neither the word can grow up amongst them, nor the heart can rest upon them; neither body nor soul can find ease while they are within or close to us. Spiritual cares are as sharp, but more profitable; they pain us, but leave the soul better. They break our sleep, but for a sweeter rest; we are not well, but either while we have them, or after we have had them. It is as impossible to have spiritual health without these, as to have bodily strength with the other.

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XLI.—In temporal good things, it is best to live in doubt, not making full account of that which we hold in so weak a tenure: in spiritual, with confidence; not fearing that which is warranted to us by an infallible promise and sure earnest. He lives more contentedly that is most secure for this world, most resolute for the other.

XLII.—God hath, in nature, given every man inclinations to some one particular calling, which if he follow, he excels, if he cross, he proves a non-proficient and changeable: but all men's natures are equally indisposed to grace, and to the common vocation of Christianity; we are all born heathens. To do well, nature must, in the first, be observed and followed; in the other, crossed and overcome.

XLIII.—Good-man is a title given to the lowest; whereas all titles of greatness, worship, honour, are observed and attributed with choice. The speech of the world bewrays their mind, and shows the common estimation of goodness compared with other qualities. The world therefore is an ill herald, and unskilful in the true styles. It were happy that goodness were so common, and pity that it either should not stand with greatness or not be preferred to it.

XLIV.—Amongst all actions, Satan is ever busiest in the best, and most in the best part of the best: as in the end of prayer, when the heart should close up itself with most comfort. He never fears us but when we are well employed; and the more likelihood he sees of our profit, the more is his envy and labour to distract us. We should love ourselves as much as he hates us, and therefore strive so much the more towards our good, as his malice striveth to interrupt it. We do nothing, if we contend not when we are resisted. The good soul is ever in contradiction; denying what is granted, and contending for that which is denied; suspecting when it is gainsaid, and fearing liberty.

XLV.—God forewarns ere he try, because he would be prevented: Satan steals upon us suddenly by temptations, because he would foil us. If we relent not upon God's premonition, and meet not the lingering pace of his punishments to forestall them; he punisheth more, by how much his warning was more evident and more large. God's trials must be met when they come; Satan's must be seen before they come; and if we be not armed ere we be assaulted, we shall be foiled ere we can be armed.

XLVI.—It is not good to be continual in denunciation of judg-

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ment: the noise to which we are accustomed, though loud, wakes us not; whereas a less, if unusual, stirreth us. The next way to make threatenings contemned, is to make them common. It is a profitable rod that strikes sparingly, and frights somewhat oftener than it smiteth.

XLVII.—Want of use causeth disability; and custom, perfection. Those that have not used to pray in their closet cannot pray in public but coldly and in form. He that discontinues meditation shall be long in recovering: whereas the man inured to these exercises, who is not dressed till he have prayed, nor hath supped till he hath meditated, doth both these well, and with ease. He that intermits good duties incurs a double loss: of the blessing that followeth good, of the faculty of doing it.

XLVIII.—Christianity is both an easy yoke and an hard; hard to take up, easy to bear when once taken. The heart requires much labour, ere it can be induced, to stoop under it, and finds as much contentment when it hath stooped. The worldling thinks religion servility; but the Christian knows whose slave he was till he entered into this service; and that no bondage can be so evil as freedom from these bonds.

XLIX.—It is a wonder how full of shifts nature is, ready to turn over all good purposes. If we think of death, she suggests secretly; "Tush, it shall not come yet:" if of judgment for sin; "This concerns not thee; it shall not come at all:" if of heaven, and our labour to reach it; "Trouble not thyself; it will come soon enough alone." Address thyself to pray; "It is yet unseasonable; stay for a better opportunity:" to give alms; "Thou knowest not thine own future wants:" to reprove; "What needest thou thrust thyself into wilful hatred?" Every good action hath his let. He can never be good that is not resolute.

L.—All arts are maids to divinity; therefore they both vail to her and do her service; and she, like a grave mistress, controls them at pleasure. Natural philosophy teacheth, that of nothing can be nothing made, and that from the privation to the habit is no return: divinity takes her up for these; and, upon supernatural principles, teaches her a creation, a resurrection. Philosophy teaches us to follow sense as an infallible guide; divinity tells her, that faith is of things not seen. Logic teaches us first to discourse, then to resolve; divinity, to assent without arguing. Civil law teacheth, that long custom prescribeth: divinity, that old things are passed: moral philosophy, that tallying of injuries

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is justice; divinity, that good must be returned for ill: policy, that better is a mischief than an inconvenience; divinity, that we may not do evil that good may ensue. The school is well ordered while divinity keeps the chair; but if any other skill usurp it, and check their mistress, there can follow nothing but confusion and atheism.

LI.—Much difference is to be made betwixt a revolter and a man trained up in error: a Jew and an Arian both deny Christ's Deity; yet this opinion is not in both punished with bodily death. Yea, a revolt to a less error is more punishable than education in a capital heresy: errors of judgment, though less regarded than errors of practice, yet are more pernicious; but none so deadly as theirs that once were in the truth. If truth be not sued to, it is dangerous; but if forsaken, desperate.

LII.—It is an ill argument of a good action not well done when we are glad that it is done: to be affected with the comfort of the conscience of well performing it, is good; but merely to rejoice that the act is over, is carnal. He never can begin cheerfully that is glad he hath ended.

LIII.—He that doth not secret service to God with some delight doth but counterfeit in public. The truth of any act or passion is then best tried when it is without witness. Openly, many sinister respects may draw from us a form of religious duties; secretly, nothing but the power of a good conscience. It is to be feared God hath more true and devout service in closets than in churches.

LIV.—Words and diseases grow upon us with years. In age, we talk much, because we have seen much, and soon after shall cease talking for ever: we are most diseased, because nature is weakest; and death, which is near, must have harbingers. Such is the old age of the world: no marvel if this last time be full of writing and weak discourse, full of sects and heresies, which are the sicknesses of this great and decayed body.

LV.—The best ground untilled soonest runs out into rank weeds. Such are God's children; overgrown with security ere they are aware, unless they be well exercised both with God's plough of affliction, and their own industry in meditation. A man of knowledge, that is either negligent or uncorrected, cannot but grow wild and godless.

LVI.—With us, vilest things are most common; but with God, the best things are most frequently given. Grace, which is the

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noblest of all God's favours, is unpartially bestowed upon all willing receivers; whereas, nobility of blood and height of place, blessings of an inferior nature, are reserved for few. Herein the Christian follows his Father: his prayers, which are his richest portion, he communicates to all; his substance, according to his ability, to few.

LVII.—God therefore gives because he hath given, making his former favours arguments for more; man therefore shuts his hand because he hath opened it. There is no such way to procure more from God as to urge him with what he hath done. All God's blessings are profitable and excellent; not so much in themselves, as that they are inducements to greater.

LVIII.—God's immediate actions are best at first: the frame of this creation, how exquisite was it under his hand! afterward, blemished by our sin. Man's endeavours are weak in their beginnings, and perfecter by degrees. No science, no device, hath ever been perfect in his cradle, or at once hath seen his birth and maturity; of the same nature are those actions which God worketh mediately by us, according to our measure of receipt. The cause of both is, on the one side, the infiniteness of his wisdom and power, which cannot be corrected by any second essays; on the other, our weakness, helping itself by former grounds and trials. He is an happy man that detracts nothing from God's works, and adds most to his own.

LIX.—The old saying is more common than true, that those which are in hell know no other heaven; for this makes the damned perfectly miserable, that, out of their own torment, they see the felicity of the saints, together with their impossibility of attaining it. Sight, without hope of fruition, is a torment alone. Those that here might see God and will not, or do see him obscurely and love him not, shall once see him with anguish of soul and not enjoy him.

LX.—Sometimes evil speeches come from good men in their unadvisedness; and sometimes even the good speeches of men may proceed from an ill spirit. No confession could be better than Satan gave of Christ. It is not enough to consider what is spoken, or by whom, but whence, and for what. The spirit is oftentimes tried by the speech; but other times the speech must be examined by the spirit, and the spirit by the rule of an higher word.

LXI.—Greatness puts high thoughts and big words into a man;

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whereas the dejected mind takes carelessly what offers itself. Every worldling is base-minded; and therefore his thoughts creep still low upon the earth. The Christian both is and knows himself truly great, and thereupon mindeth and speaketh of spiritual, immortal, glorious, heavenly things. So much as the soul stoopeth unto earthly thoughts, so much is it unregenerate.

LXII.—Long acquaintance, as it maketh those things which are evil to seem less evil, so it makes good things, which at first were unpleasant, delightful. There is no evil of pain, nor no moral good action, which is not harsh at the first. Continuance of evil, which might seem to weary us, is the remedy and abatement of weariness; and the practice of good, as it profiteth, so it pleaseth. He that is a stranger to good and evil finds both of them troublesome. God therefore doth well for us while he exerciseth us with long afflictions; and we do well to ourselves, while we continually busy ourselves in good exercises.

LXIII.—Sometimes it is well taken by men that we humble ourselves lower than there is cause: *Thy servant Jacob*, saith that good patriarch to his brother, to his inferior. And no less well doth God take these submiss extenuations of ourselves: *I am a worm, and no man: surely I am more foolish than a man, and have not the understanding of a man in me.* But I never find that any man bragged to God, although in a matter of truth, and within the compass of his desert, and was accepted. A man may be too lowly in his dealing with men, even unto contempt; with God he cannot, but the lower he falleth, the higher is his exaltation.

LXIV.—The soul is fed, as the body; starved with hunger, as the body; requires proportionable diet and necessary variety, as the body. All ages and statures of the soul bear not the same nourishment. There is milk for spiritual infants, strong meat for the grown Christian. The spoon is fit for the one, the knife for the other. The best Christian is not so grown that he need to scorn the spoon; but the weak Christian may find a strong feed dangerous. How many have been cast away with spiritual surfeits, because, being but new-born, they have swallowed down big morsels of the highest mysteries of godliness, which they never could digest, but, together with them, have cast up their proper nourishment! A man must first know the power of his stomach ere he know how with safety and profit to frequent God's ordinary.

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LXV.—It is very hard for the best man, in a sudden extremity of death, to satisfy himself in apprehending his stay, and reposing his heart upon it; for the soul is so oppressed with sudden terror, that it cannot well command itself till it have digested an evil. It were miserable for the best Christian, if all his former prayers and meditations did not serve to aid him in his last straits, and meet together in the centre of his extremity, yielding, though not sensible relief, yet secret benefit to the soul; whereas the worldly man, in this case, having not laid up for this hour, hath no comfort from God, or from others, or from himself.

LXVI.—All external good or evil is measured by sense; neither can we account that either good or ill which doth neither actually avail nor hurt us: spiritually, this rule holds not. All our best good is insensible: for all our future (which is the greatest) good, we hold only in hope; and the present favour of God we have many times, and feel not. The stomach finds the best digestion even in sleep, when we least perceive it; and while we are most awake, this power worketh in us either to further strength or disease, without our knowledge of what is done within. And, on the other side, that man is most dangerously sick, in whom nature decays without his feeling, without complaint. To know ourselves happy, is good; but woe were to us Christians, if we could not be happy and know it not!

LXVII.—There are none that ever did so much mischief to the Church as those that have been excellent in wit and learning. Others may be spiteful enough, but want power to accomplish their malice. An enemy that hath both strength and craft is worthy to be feared. None can sin against the Holy Ghost but those which have had former illumination. Tell not me what parts a man hath, but what grace; honest sottishness is better than profane eminence.

LXVIII.—The entertainment of all spiritual events must be with fear or hope, but of all earthly extremities must be with contempt or derision; for what is terrible is worthy of a Christian's contempt; what is pleasant, to be turned over with a scorn. The mean requires a mean affection betwixt love and hatred. We may not love them, because of their vanity; we may not hate them, because of their necessary use. It is an hard thing to be a wise host, and to fit our entertainment to all comers; which if it be not done, the soul is soon wasted, either for want of customers or for the misrule of ill guests.

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LXIX.—God and man build in a contrary order. Man lays the foundation first; then adds the walls; the roof last: God began the roof first, spreading out this vault of heaven ere he laid the base of the earth. Our thoughts must follow the order of his workmanship. Heaven must be minded first, earth afterward; and so much more, as it is seen more. Our meditation must herein follow our sense: a few miles give bounds to our view of earth; whereas we may near see half the heaven at once. He that thinks most, both of that which is most seen, and of that which is not seen at all, is happiest.

LXX.—I have ever noted it a true sign of a false heart, to be scrupulous and nice in small matters, negligent in the main; whereas the good soul is still curious in substantial points, and not careless in things of an inferior nature; accounting no duty so small as to be neglected, and no care great enough for principal duties; not so tything mint and cummin that he should forget justice and judgment; nor yet so regarding judgment and justice that he should contemn mint and cummin. He that thus misplaces his conscience will be found either hypocritical or superstitious.

LXXI.—It argues the world full of atheists, that those offences which may impeach human society are entertained with an answerable hatred and rigour; those which do immediately wrong the supreme majesty of God are turned over with scarce so much as dislike. If we conversed with God as we do with men, his right would be at least as precious to us as our own. All that converse not with God are without God. Not only those that are against God, but those that are without God, are atheists. We may be too charitable: I fear not to say, that these our last times abound with honest atheists.

LXXII.—The best thing corrupted is worst: an ill man is the worst of all creatures; an ill Christian the worst of all men; an ill professor the worst of all Christians; an ill minister the worst of all professors.

LXXIII.—Naturally, life is before death, and death is only a privation of life; spiritually, it is contrary. As Paul saith of the grain, so may we of man in the business of regeneration: he must die before he can live; yet this death presupposes a life that was once, and should be. God chooses to have the difficultest first; we must be content with the pain of dying, ere we feel the com-

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fort of life. As we die to nature, ere we live in glory; so we must die to sin, ere we can live to grace.

LXXIV.—Death did not first strike Adam, the first sinful man; nor Cain, the first hypocrite; but Abel, the innocent and righteous. The first soul that met with death overcame death; the first soul that parted from earth went to heaven. Death argues not displeasure; because he whom God loved best dies first, and the murderer is punished with living.

LXXV.—The lives of most are mispent only for want of a certain end of their actions; wherein they do as unwise archers, shoot away their arrows, they know not at what mark; they live only out of the present, not directing themselves and their proceedings to one universal scope; whence they alter upon all change of occasions, and never reach any perfection; neither can do other but continue in uncertainty, and end in discomfort. Others aim at one certain mark, but a wrong one. Some, though fewer, level at the right end, but amiss. To live without one main and common end is idleness and folly: to live to a false end, is deceit and loss: true Christian wisdom both shows the end and finds the way. And, as cunning politics have many plots to compass one and the same design by a determined succession; so the wise Christian, failing in the means, yet still fetcheth about to his steady end, with a constant change of endeavours. Such one only lives to purpose, and at last repents not that he hath lived.

LXXVI.—The shipwreck of a good conscience is the casting away of all other excellencies. It is no rare thing to note the soul of a wilful sinner stripped of all her graces, and by degrees exposed to shame: so those whom we have known admired have fallen to be level with their fellows; and from thence beneath them, to a mediocrity; and afterwards, to sottishness and contempt, below the vulgar. Since they have cast away the best, it is just with God to take away the worst; and to cast off them in lesser regards which have rejected him in greater.

LXXVII.—It hath ever been counted more noble and successful to set upon an open enemy in his own home, than to expect till he set upon us while we make only a defensive war. This rule serves us for our last enemy, death; whence that old demand of Epicure is easily answered, Whether it be better death should come to us, or that we should meet him in the way; meet him in our minds, ere he seize upon our bodies. Our cowardliness, our

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unpreparation, is his advantage: whereas, true boldness in confronting him dismays and weakens his forces. Happy is that soul that can send out the scouts of his thoughts beforehand, to discover the power of death afar off, and then can resolutely encounter him, at unawares, upon advantage: such one lives with security, dies with comfort.

LXXVIII.—Many a man sends others to heaven, and yet goes to hell himself; and not few, having drawn others to hell, yet themselves return, by a late repentance, to life. In a good action, it is not good to search too deeply into the intention of the agent; but, in silence, to make our best benefit of the work: in an evil, it is not safe to regard the quality of the person or his success; but to consider the action abstracted from all circumstances in his own kind. So we shall neither neglect good deeds, because they speed not well in some hands, nor affect a prosperous evil.

LXXIX.—God doth some singular actions, wherein we cannot imitate him; some, wherein we may not; most, wherein he may and would fain be followed. He fetcheth good out of evil; so may we turn our own and others' sins to private or public good: we may not do evil for a good use, but we must use our evil once done to good. I hope I shall not offend, to say, that the good use which is made of sins is as gainful to God, as that which arises from good actions. Happy is that man that can use either his good well or his evil.

LXXX.—There is no difference betwixt anger and madness, but continuance; for raging anger is a short madness; what else argues the shaking of the hands and lips; paleness or redness or swelling of the face; glaring of the eyes; stammering of the tongue; stamping with the feet; unsteady motions of the whole body; rash actions, which we remember not to have done; distracted and wild speeches? And madness, again, is nothing but a continued rage; yea, some madness rageth not: such a mild madness is more tolerable than frequent and furious anger.

LXXXI.—Those that would keep state must keep aloof off, especially if their qualities be not answerable in height to their place; for many great persons are like a well wrought picture upon a coarse cloth, which afar off shows fair, but near hand the roundness of the thread mars the good workmanship. Concealment of gifts, after some one commended act, is the best way to admiration and secret honour: but he that would profit, must

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vent himself oft and liberally, and show what he is without all private regard. As therefore many times honour follows modesty unlooked for; so, contrarily, a man may show no less pride in silence and obscurity, than others which speak and write for glory. And that other pride is so much the worse as it is more unprofitable; for whereas those which put forth their gifts benefit others while they seek themselves; these are so wholly devoted to themselves, that their secrecy doth no good to others.

LXXXII.—Such as a man's delights and cares are in health, such are both his thoughts and speeches commonly on his death-bed: the proud man talks of his fair suits; the glutton, of his dishes; the wanton, of his beastliness; the religious man, of heavenly things. The tongue will hardly leave that to which the heart is inured. If we would have good motions to visit us while we are sick, we must send for them familiarly in our health.

LXXXIII.—He is a rare man that hath not some kind of madness reigning in him: one, a dull madness of melancholy; another, a conceited madness of pride; another, a superstitious madness of false devotion; a fourth, of ambition or covetousness; a fifth, the furious madness of anger; a sixth, the laughing madness of extreme mirth; a seventh, a drunken madness; an eighth, of outrageous lust; a ninth, the learned madness of curiosity; a tenth, the worst madness of profaneness and atheism. It is as hard to reckon up all kinds of madnesses as of dispositions. Some are more noted and punished than others; so that the madman in one kind as much condemns another, as the sober man condemns him. Only that man is both good and wise and happy, that is free from all kinds of frenzy.

LXXXIV.—There be some honest errors wherewith I never found that God was offended: that a husband should think his own wife comely, although ill-favoured in the eyes of others; that a man should think more meanly of his own good parts, than of weaker in others; to give charitable, though mistaken constructions of doubtful actions and persons; which are the effects of natural affection, humility, love; were never censured by God: herein alone we err, if we err not.

LXXXV.—No marvel if the worldling escape earthly afflictions. God corrects him not, because he loves him not. He is base-born and begot. God will not do him the favour to whip him. The world afflicts him not, because it loves him; for each man is indul-

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gent to his own. God uses not the rod where he means to use the sword. The pillory or scourge is for those malefactors which shall escape execution.

LXXXVI.—Weak stomachs, which cannot digest large meals, feed oft and little. For our souls, that which we want in measure we must supply in frequence. We can never fully enough comprehend in our thoughts the joys of heaven, the meritorious sufferings of Christ, the terrors of the second death; therefore we must meditate of them often.

LXXXVII.—The same thoughts do commonly meet us in the same places, as if we had left them there till our return; for that the mind doth secretly frame to itself memorative heads whereby it recalls easily the same conceits. It is best to employ our mind there where it is most fixed. Our devotion is so dull, it cannot have too many advantages.

LXXXVIII.—I find but one example in all Scripture of any bodily cure which our Saviour wrought by degrees; only the blind man, whose weak faith craved help by others, not by himself, saw men first like trees, then in their true shape; all other miraculous cures of Christ were done at once, and perfect at first. Contrarily, I find but one example of a soul fully healed, that is, sanctified and glorified both, in a day; all other, by degrees and leisure. The steps of grace are soft and short. Those external miracles he wrought immediately by himself, and therefore no marvel if they were absolute, like their Author. The miraculous work of our regeneration, he works together with us; he giveth it efficacy, we give it imperfection.

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AN

HOLY RAPTURE;

OR,

A PATHETICAL MEDITATION

OF THE

LOVE OF CHRIST.

SECT. I.—*The love of Christ, how passing knowledge; how free; of us, before we were.*

WHAT is it, O blessed apostle, what is it for which thou dost so earnestly bow thy knees in the behalf of thine Ephesians, unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? even this, that they *may know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge*, Ephes. iii. 14, 19.

Give me leave, first, to wonder at thy suit; and then, much more at what thou suest for. Were thine affections raised so high to thine Ephesians, that thou shouldest crave for them impossible favours? Did thy love so far overshoot thy reason, as to pray they might attain to the knowledge of that which cannot be known? It is the love of Christ which thou wishest they may know; and it is that love which thou sayest is past all knowledge. What shall we say to this? Is it for that there may be holy ambitions of those heights of grace which we can never hope actually to obtain? or is it rather, that thou supposest and prayest they may reach to the knowledge of that love, the measure whereof they could never aspire to know?

Surely so it is, O blessed Jesu. That thou hast loved us we know, but how much thou hast loved us is past the comprehension of angels. Those glorious spirits, as they desire to look into the deep mystery of our redemption, so they wonder to behold that divine love whereby it is wrought; but they can no more reach to the bottom of it than they can affect to be infinite; for surely

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no less than an endless line can serve to fathom a bottomless depth. Such, O Saviour, is the abyss of thy love to miserable man. Alas! what do we poor wretched dust of the earth go about to measure it by the spans and inches of our shallow thoughts? Far, far be such presumption from us; only admit us, O blessed Lord, to look at, to admire and adore that which we give up for incomprehensible.

What shall we then say to this love, O dear Jesu, both as thine, and as cast upon us? All earthly love supposeth some kind of equality, or proportion at least, betwixt the person that loves and is loved: here, is none at all. So as, which is past wonder, extremes meet without a mean; for lo, thou, who art the eternal and absolute Being, God blessed for ever, lovedst me, that had no being at all: thou lovedst me, both when I was not, and could never have been but by thee. It was from thy love that I had any being at all; much more that, when thou hadst given me a being, thou shouldest follow me with succeeding mercies. Who but thou, who art infinite in goodness, would love that which is not? Our poor sensual love is drawn from us by the sight of a face or picture; neither is ever raised, but upon some pleasing motive: thou wouldest make that which thou wouldest love, and wouldest love that which thou hadst made. O God, was there ever love so free, so gracious, as this of thine? Who can be capable to love us, but men or angels? Men love us, because they see something in us which they think amiable; angels love us, because thou doest so: but why dost thou, O blessed Lord, love us, but because thou wouldest. There can be no cause of thy will, which is the cause of all things. Even so, Lord, since this love did rise only from thee, let the praise and glory of it rest only in thee.

Sect. II.—*How free of us, that had made ourselves vile and miserable.*

Yet more, Lord, we had lost ourselves before we were; and, having forfeited what we should be, had made ourselves perfectly miserable. Even when we were worse than nothing, thou wouldest love us.

Was there ever any eye enamoured of deformity? can there be any bodily deformity comparable to that of sin? yet, Lord, when sin had made us abominably loathsome, didst thou cast thy love upon us. A little scurf of leprosy, or some few nasty spots

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of morphew, or but some unsavoury scent, sets us off, and turns our love into detestation. But for thee, O God, when we were become as foul and as ugly as sin could make us, even then was thy love inflamed towards us; even when we were weltering in our blood, thou saidst, "Live;" and washedst, and anointedst us, and clothedst us with a broidered work, and deckedst us with ornaments, and graciously espousedst us to thyself, and receivedst us into thine own bosom: *Lord, what is man, that thou art* thus *mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou* thus *visitest him?*

O what are we in comparison of thy once glorious angels? They sinned and fell, never to be recovered, never to be loosed from those everlasting chains, wherein they are reserved to the judgment of the great day. Whence is it then, O Saviour, whence is it, that thou hast shut up thy mercy from those thy more excellent creatures, and hast extended it to us vile sinful dust? whence, but that thou wouldest love man because thou wouldest?

Alas! it is discouragement enough to our feeble friendship, that he to whom we wished well is miserable. Our love doth gladly attend upon and enjoy his prosperity; but when his estate is utterly sunk, and his person exposed to contempt and ignominy, yea, to torture and death, who is there that will then put forth himself to own a forlorn and perishing friend? But for thee, O blessed Jesu, so ardent was thy love to us, that it was not in the power of our extreme misery to abate it; yea, so as that the deploredness of our condition did but heighten that holy flame. What speak I of shame or sufferings? hell itself could not keep thee off from us; even from that pit of eternal perdition didst thou fetch our condemned souls, and hast contrarily vouchsafed to put us into a state of everlasting blessedness.

Sect. III.—*How yet free of us, that were professed enemies.*

The common disposition of men pretends to a kind of justice in giving men their own; so as they will repay love for love, and think they may for hatred return enmity. Nature itself then teacheth us to love our friends; it is only grace that can love an enemy.

But as of injuries, so of enmities thereupon grounded, there are certain degrees; some are slight and trivial, some main and capital. If a man do but scratch my face, or give some light

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dash to my fame, it is no great mastery, upon submission, to receive such an offender to favour; but if he have endeavoured to ruin my estate, to wound my reputation, to cut my throat; not only to pardon this man, but to hug him in my arms, to lodge him in my bosom as my entire friend, this would be no other than an high improvement of my charity.

O Lord Jesu, what was I but the worst of enemies when thou vouchsafedst to embrace me with thy loving mercy? how had I shamefully rebelled against thee, and yielded up all my members as instruments of unrighteousness and sin! how had I crucified thee, the Lord of life! how had I done little other, than trod under foot the blessed Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing! how had I, in some sort, done despite unto the Spirit of grace! yet even then, in despite of all my most odious unworthiness, didst thou spread thine arms to receive me; yea, thou openedst thy heart to let me in. O love, passing, not knowledge only, but wonder also! O mercy, not incident into any thing less than infinite, nor by any thing less comprehensible!

Sect. IV.—*The wonderful effects of the love of Christ. His incarnation.*

But, O dear Lord, when, from the object of thy mercy, I cast mine eyes upon the effects and improvement of thy divine favours, and see what thy love hath drawn from thee towards the sons of men, how am I lost in a just amazement!

It is that which fetched thee down from the glory of the highest heavens, from the bosom of thine eternal Father to this lower world, the region of sorrow and death. It is that which, to the wonder of angels, clothed thee with this flesh of ours, and brought thee, who thoughtest it no robbery to be equal with God, to an estate lower than thine own creatures.

O mercy, transcending the admiration of all the glorious spirits of heaven, that God would be incarnate! Surely, that all those celestial powers should be redacted to either worms or nothing, that all this goodly frame of creation should run back into its first confusion or be reduced to one single atom, it is not so high a wonder, as for God to become man: those changes, though the highest nature is capable of, are yet but of things finite; this is of an infinite subject, with which the most excellent of finite things can hold no proportion.

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O the great mystery of godliness; *God manifested in the flesh, and seen of angels!* Those heavenly spirits had, ever since they were made, seen his most glorious Deity, and adored him as their omnipotent Creator; but to see that God of spirits invested with flesh, was such a wonder as had been enough, if their nature could have been capable of it, to have astonished even glory itself; and whether to see him that was their God so humbled below themselves, or to see humanity thus advanced above themselves, were the greater wonder to them, they only know.

It was your foolish misprision, O ye ignorant Lystrians, that you took the servants for the Master: here only is it verified, which you supposed, that God is come down to us in the likeness of man, and as man conversed with men.

What a disparagement do we think it was for the great monarch of Babylon, for seven years together as a beast to converse with the beasts of the fields! yet, alas! beasts and men are fellow creatures; made of one earth; drawing in the same air; returning, for their bodily part, to the same dust; symbolizing in many qualities, and in some mutually transcending each others': so as here may seem to be some terms of a tolerable proportion; sith many men are in disposition too like unto beasts, and some beasts are in outward shape somewhat like unto men: but for him that was, and is, *God blessed for ever*, eternal, infinite, incomprehensible, to put on flesh, and become a man amongst men, was to stoop below all possible disparities that heaven and earth can afford. O Saviour, the lower thine abasement was for us, the higher was the pitch of thy divine love to us!

Sect. V.—*His love in his sufferings.*

Yet, in this our human condition there are degrees; one rules and glitters in all earthly glory, another sits despised in the dust; one passes the time of his life in much jollity and pleasure; another wears out his days in sorrow and discontentment. Blessed Jesu, since thou wouldest be a man, why wouldest thou not be the King of men? since thou wouldest come down to our earth, why wouldest thou not enjoy the best entertainment the earth could yield thee? yea, since thou, who art the eternal Son of God, wouldest be the Son of man, why didst thou not appear in a state like to the King of heaven, attended with the glorious retinue of angels? O yet greater wonder of mercies, the same infinite love that brought thee down to the form of man would also bring thee down, being

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man, to the form of a servant! So didst thou love man, that thou wouldest take part with him of his misery, that he might take part with thee of thy blessedness: thou wouldest be poor, to enrich us; thou wouldest be burdened, for our ease; tempted, for our victory; despised, for our glory.

With what less than ravishment of spirit can I behold thee, who wert from everlasting clothed with glory and majesty, wrapped in rags! Thee, who fillest heaven and earth with the majesty of thy glory, cradled in a manger! Thee, who art the God of power, fleeing in thy mother's arms from the rage of a weak man! Thee, who art the God of Israel, driven to be nursed out of the bosom of thy Church! Thee, who madest the heaven of heavens, busily working in the homely trade of a foster-father! Thee, who commandest the devils to their chains, transported and tempted with that foul spirit! Thee, who art God all-sufficient, exposed to hunger, thirst, weariness, danger, contempt, poverty, revilings, scourgings, persecution! Thee, who art the just Judge of all the world, accused and condemned! Thee, who art the Lord of life, dying upon the tree of shame and curse! Thee, who art the eternal Son of God, struggling with thy Father's wrath! Thee, who hast said, *I and my Father are one,* sweating drops of blood in thine agony, and crying out on the cross, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Thee, who hast the keys of hell and of death, lying sealed up in another man's grave!

O Saviour, whither hath thy love to mankind carried thee? What sighs, and groans, and tears, and blood hast thou spent upon us wretched men! How dear a price hast thou paid for our ransom! What raptures of spirit can be sufficient for the admiration of thy so infinite mercy? Be thou swallowed up, O my soul, in this depth of divine love; and hate to spend thy thoughts any more upon the base objects of this wretched world, when thou hast such a Saviour to take them up.

SECT. VI.—*His love, in preparing heaven for us.*

But, O blessed Jesu, if, from what thou hast suffered for me, I shall cast mine eyes upon what thou hast done for my soul, how is my heart divided betwixt the wonders of both! and may as soon tell how great either of them is, as whether of them is the greatest.

It is in Thee that I was elected from all eternity, and ordained to a glorious inheritance before there was a world. We are wont,

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O God, to marvel at and bless thy provident beneficence to the first man; that before thou wouldest bring him forth into the world, thou wert pleased to furnish such a world for him; so goodly an house over his head; so pleasant a paradise under his feet; such variety of creatures round about him, for his subjection and attendance. But how should I magnify thy mercy, who, before that man or that world had any being, hast so far loved me, as to preordain me to a place of blessedness, in that heaven which should be, and to make me a coheir with my Christ of thy glory!

And O, what an heaven is this, that thou hast laid out for me; how resplendent, how transcendently glorious! Even that lower paradise, which thou providedst for the harbour of innocence and holiness, was full of admirable beauty, pleasure, magnificence; but if it be compared with this paradise above, which thou hast prepared for the everlasting entertainment of restored souls, how mean and beggarly it was! O match too unequal, of the best piece of earth with the highest state of the heaven of heavens!

In the earthly paradise, I find thine angels, the cherubim; but it was to keep man off from that garden of delight, and from the tree of life in the midst of it: but in this heavenly one, I find millions of thy cherubim and seraphim rejoicing at man's blessedness, and welcoming the glorified souls to their heaven. There, I find but the shadow of that whereof the substance is here. There, we were so possessed of life, that yet we might forfeit it; here is life without all possibility of death. Temptation could find access thither: here, is nothing but a free and complete fruition of blessedness. There, were delights fit for earthly bodies; here, is glory more than can be enjoyed of blessed souls. That was watered with four streams, muddy and impetuous: in this is *the pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.* There, I find Thee only walking in the cool of the day: here, manifesting thy majesty continually. There, I see only a most pleasant orchard, set with all manner of varieties of flourishing and fruitful plants; here, I find also the city of God, infinitely rich and magnificent; the building of the wall of it of jasper, and the city itself pure gold, like unto clear glass, and the foundations of the wall garnished with all manner of precious stones.

All that I can here attain to see, is the pavement of thy celestial habitation. And, Lord, how glorious it is! how bespangled

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with the glittering stars; for number, for magnitude equally admirable! What is the least of them but a world of light? and what are all of them but a confluence of so many thousand worlds of beauty and brightness met in one firmament? And, if this floor of thy heavenly palace be thus richly set forth, O, how infinite glory and magnificence must there needs be within! Thy Chosen Vessel, that had the privilege to be caught up thither, and to see that divine state, whether with bodily or mental eyes, can express it no otherwise, than that it cannot possibly be expressed. No, Lord, it were not infinite if it could be uttered. Thoughts go beyond words, yet even these come far short also. He that saw it, says, *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

SECT. VII.—*His love, in our redemption from death and hell.*

Yet is thy love, O Saviour, so much more to be magnified of me, in this purchased glory, when I cast down mine eyes, and look into that horrible gulf of torment and eternal death whence thou hast rescued my poor soul.

Even out of the greatest contentment which this world is capable to afford unto mankind, to be preferred to the joys of heaven is an unconceivable advantage; but from the depth of misery to be raised up unto the highest pitch of felicity, adds so much more to the blessing as the evil from which we are delivered is more intolerable.

O blessed Jesu, what an hell is this out of which thou hast freed me! what dreadful horror is here! what darkness! what confusion! what anguish of souls, that would and cannot die! what howling and yelling and shrieking and gnashing! what everlasting burnings! what never slaking tortures! what merciless fury of unweariable tormentors! what utter despair of any possibility of release, what exquisiteness, what infiniteness of pains, that cannot, yet must be endured!

O God, if the impotent displeasure of weak men have devised so subtle engines of revenge upon their fellow-mortals for but petty offences, how can we but think thine infinite justice and wisdom must have ordained such forms and ways of punishment, for heinous sins done against thee, as may be answerable to the violation of thy Divine Majesty? O, therefore, the most fearful and deplored condition of damned spirits, never to be ended,

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never to be abated! O, those unquenchable flames! O, that burning Tophet, deep and large, and those streams of brimstone wherewith it is kindled! O that worm ever gnawing and tearing the heart, never dying, never sated! O ever-living death! O ever-renewing torments! O never-pitied, never-intermitted damnation!

From hence, O Saviour, from hence it is that thou hast fetched my condemned soul. This is the place, this is the state, out of which thou hast snatched me up into thy heaven. O love and mercy, more deep than those depths from which thou hast saved me, more high than that heaven to which thou hast advanced me!

SECT. VIII.—*Christ's love, in giving us the guard of his angels.*

Now, whereas in my passage from this state of death towards the fruition of immortal glory, I am waylaid by a world of dangers, partly through my own sinful aptness to miscarriages, and partly through the assaults of my spiritual enemies; how hath thy tender love and compassion, O blessed Jesu, undertaken to secure my soul from all these deadly perils, both without and within; without, by the guardance of thy blessed angels; within, by the powerful inoperation of thy good Spirit which thou hast given me!

O that mine eyes could be opened, with Elisha's servant, that I might see those troops of heavenly soldiers, those horses and chariots of fire, wherewith thou hast encompassed me! every one of which is able to chase away a whole host of the powers of darkness.

Who am I, Lord, who am I, that upon thy gracious appointment these glorious spirits should still watch over me in mine uprising and downlying, in my going out and coming in? that they should bear me in their arms; that they should shield me with their protection? Behold, such is their majesty and glory, that some of thy holiest servants have hardly been restrained from worshipping them; yet so great is thy love to man, as that thou hast ordained them to be *ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.* Surely they are in nature far more excellent than man, as being spiritual substances, pure intelligencers, meet to stand before the throne of thee the King of glory: what a mercy then is this, that thou, who wouldest humble thyself to be lower than they in the susception of our nature, art pleased to humble them in their offices to the guardianship of man, so far as to call them the angels of thy little

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ones upon earth! How hast thou blessed us, and how should we bless thee, in so mighty and glorious attendants!

SECT. IX.—*His love, in giving us his Holy Spirit.*

Neither hast thou, O God, merely turned us over to the protection of those tutelary spirits, but hast held us still in thine own hand, having not so strongly defenced us without as thou hast done within; since that is wrought by thine angels, this by the Spirit.

O the sovereign and powerful influences of thy Holy Ghost; whereby we are furnished with all saving graces; strengthened against all temptations; heartened against all our doubts and fears; enabled both to resist and overcome; and, upon our victories, crowned!

O divine bounty, far beyond the reach of wonder! *So God*, the Father, *loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* So God the Son loved the world of his elect, that he gave unto them the Holy Spirit of promise, whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption; whereby, according to the riches of his glory, they are strengthened with might in the inner man; by the virtue whereof, shed abroad in their hearts, they are enabled to cry, Abba, Father. O gifts, either of which are more worth than many worlds; yet, through thy goodness, O Lord, both of them mine. How rich is my soul through thy divine munificence! how overlaid with mercies! how safe in thine Almighty tuition! how happy in thy blessed possession!

Now therefore I dare, in the might of my God, bid defiance to all the gates of hell. Do your worst, O all ye principalities and powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickednesses in high places; do your worst: God is mine, and I am his; I am above your malice in the right of him whose I am. It is true, I am weak, but he is omnipotent; I am sinful, but he is infinite holiness: that power, that holiness, in his gracious application, is mine.

It is my Saviour's love that hath made this happy exchange of his righteousness for my sin, of his power for my infirmity: *Who* then *shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we*

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are more than conquerors through him that loved us: so as, *neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Lo where this love is placed; were it our love of God, how easily might the power of a prevalent temptation separate us from it, or it from us! For, alas! what hold is to be taken of our affections, which, like unto water, are so much more apt to freeze, because they have been heated? but it is the love of God to us in Christ Jesus, which is ever as himself, constant and eternal. He can no more cease to love us than to be himself: he cannot but be unchangeable; we cannot but be happy.

SECT. X.—*Our sense and improvement of Christ's love, in all the former particulars; and first, in respect of the inequality of the persons.*

All this, O dear Jesu, hast thou done, all this hast thou suffered for men. And, O now for an heart that may be some ways answerable to thy mercies! Surely, even good natures hate to be in debt for love, and are ready to repay favours with interest.

O for a soul sick of love, yea, sick unto death! Why should I, how can I, be any otherwise, any whit less affected, O Saviour? This only sickness is my health; this death is my life; and not to be thus sick is to be dead in sins and trespasses. I am rock, and not flesh, if I be not wounded with these heavenly darts. Ardent affection is apt to attract love, even where is little or no beauty; and excellent beauty is no less apt to inflame the heart, where there is no answer of affection: but when these two meet together, what breast can hold against them? and here they are both in an eminent degree. Thou canst say even of thy poor Church, though labouring under many imperfections, *Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart, with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck: how fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse!* And canst thou, O blessed Saviour, be so taken with the incurious and homely features of thy faithful ones; and shall not we much more be altogether enamoured of thine absolute and divine beauty, of whom every believing soul can say, *My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold. His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters. His*

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cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh, &c. It hath pleased thee, O Lord, out of the sweet ravishments of thy heavenly love, to say to thy poor Church, *Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me:* but O, let me say unto thee, "Turn thine eyes to me, that they may overcome me:" I would be thus ravished, thus overcome: I would be thus out of myself, that I might be all in thee.

Thou lovedst me before I had being: let me, now that I have a being, be wholly taken up with thy love: let me set all my soul upon thee, that gavest me being; upon thee, who art the eternal and absolute Self-Being; who hast said, and only could say, *I am that I am.* Alas! Lord, we are nothing but what thou wilt have us, and cease to be when thou callest in that breath of life which thou hast lent us: thou art that incomprehensibly glorious and infinite self-existing spirit, from eternity, in eternity, to eternity; in and from whom all things are. It is thy wonderful mercy, that thou wouldest condescend so low as to vouchsafe to be loved of my wretchedness; of whom thou mightest justly require and expect nothing but terror and trembling. It is my happiness, that I may be allowed to love a Majesty so infinitely glorious. O let me not be so far wanting to my own felicity, as to be less than ravished with thy love.

Sect. XI.—*A further enforcement of our love to Christ, in respect of our unworthiness and his sufferings, and prepared glory.*

Thou lovedst me when I was deformed, loathly, forlorn, and miserable; shall I not now love thee, when thou hast freed me, and decked me with the ornaments of thy graces? Lord Jesu, who should enjoy the fruit of thine own favours but thyself? How shamefully injurious were it, that, when thou hast trimmed up my soul, it should prostitute itself to the love of the world! O, take my heart to thee alone; possess thyself of that which none can claim but thyself.

Thou lovedst me when I was a professed rebel against thee; and receivedst me, not to mercy only, but to the endearment of a subject, a servant, a son: where should I place the improvement of the thankful affections of my loyalty and duty, but upon thee?

Thou, O God, hast so loved us, that thou wouldest become the

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Son of man for our sakes; that we, who are the sons of men, might become the sons of God. O, that we could put off the man, to put on Christ; that we could neglect and hate ourselves for thee, that hast so dearly loved us, as to lay aside thine heavenly glory for us!

How shall I be vile enough, O Saviour, for thee; who, for my sake, being the Lord of life and glory, wouldest take upon thee the shape of a servant! How should I welcome that poverty, which thy choice hath sanctified! How resolutely shall I grapple with the temptations of that enemy whom thou hast foiled for me! How cheerfully should I pass through those miseries and that death which thou hast sweetened! With what comfortable assurance shall I look upon the face of that merciful justice which thou hast satisfied!

But O, what a blessed inheritance hast thou, in thine infinite love, provided for me! *an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven* for me: so as, *when* my *earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved,* I *have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;*—an house? yea, a palace of heavenly state and magnificence. Neither is it less than a kingdom that abides there for me: a kingdom, so much more above these worldly monarchies, as heaven is above this clod of earth,

Now, Lord, what conceits, what affections of mind can be in the least sort answerable to so transcendent mercy? If some friend shall have been pleased to bestow some mean legacy upon me, or shall have feoffed me in some few acres of his land, how deeply do I find myself obliged to the love and memory of so kind a benefactor! O then, Lord, how can my soul be capable of those thoughts and dispositions which may reach to the least proportion of thine infinite bounty, who, of a poor worm on earth, hast made me an heir of the kingdom of heaven?

Woe is me, how subject are these earthly principalities to hazard and mutability, whether through death or insurrection! but this crown, which thou hast laid up for me is immarcessible: and shall sit immovably fast upon my head; not for years, nor for millions of ages, but for all eternity. O, let it be my heaven here below, in the mean while, to live in a perpetual fruition of thee; and to begin those hallelujahs to thee here, which shall be as endless as thy mercy and my blessedness.

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SECT. XII.—*The improvement of our love to Christ for the mercy of his deliverance, of the tuition of his angels, of the powerful working of his good Spirit.*

Hadst thou been pleased to have translated me from thy former paradise, the most delightful seat of man's original integrity and happiness, to the glory of the highest heaven, the preferment had been infinitely gracious; but to bring my soul from the nethermost hell, and to place it among the choir of angels, doubles the thank of thy mercy and the measure of my obligation. How thankful was thy prophet but to an Ebedmelech, that, by a cord and rags let down into that dark dungeon, helped him out of that uncomfortable pit wherein he was lodged: yet what was there but a little cold, hunger, stench, closeness, obscurity? Lord, how should I bless thee, that hast fetched my soul from that pit of eternal horror, from that lake of fire and brimstone, from the everlasting torments of the damned; wherein I had deserved to perish for ever? I will sing of thy power; unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God is my deliverer, and the God of my mercy.

But, O Lord, if yet thou shouldest leave me in my own hands, where were I? how easily should I be robbed of thee with every temptation! how should I be made the scorn and insultation of men and devils! It is thy wonderful mercy, that thou hast given thine angels charge over me. Those angels, great in power and glorious in majesty, are my sure, though invisible, guard. O blessed Jesu, what an honour, what a safety is this, that those heavenly spirits which attend thy throne should be my champions! Those that ministered to thee after thy temptation are ready to assist and relieve me in mine. They can neither neglect their charge, because they are perfectly holy; nor fail of their victory, because they are, under thee, the most powerful. I see you, O ye blessed guardians, I see you, by the eye of my faith, no less truly, than the eye of my sense sees my bodily attendants: I do truly, though spiritually, feel your presence, by your gracious operations in, upon, and for me: and I do heartily bless my God and yours for you, and for those saving offices that, through his merciful appointment, you ever do for my soul.

But, as it was with thine Israelites of old, that it would not content them that thou promisedst and wouldest send thine angel before them, to bring them into the land flowing with milk and honey, unless thy presence, O Lord, should also go along with

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them; so is it still with me and all thine, wert not thou with and in us, what could thine angels do for us? In thee it is that they move and are. The same infinite Spirit which works in and by them, works also in me. From thee it is, O thou blessed and eternal Spirit, that I have any stirrings of holy motions and breathings of good desires, any life of grace, any will to resist, any power to overcome evil. It is thou, O God, *that girdest me with strength unto battle: thou hast given me the shield of thy salvation: thy right hand hath holden me up: thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies.* Glory and praise be to thee, O Lord, which always causest us to triumph in Christ; who crownest us with lovingkindness and tender mercies; and hast not held us short of the best of thy favours.

Truly, Lord, hadst thou given us but a mere being, as thou hast done to the lowest rank of thy creatures, it had been more than thou owest us; more than ever we could be able to requite to thy divine bounty: for every being is good; and the least degree of good is far above our worthiness.

But that to our being thou hast added life, it is yet an higher measure of thy mercy; for certainly, of thy common favours, life is the most precious.

Yet this is such a benefit as may be had and not perceived; for even the plants of the earth live and feel it not: that to our life, therefore, thou hast made a further accession of sense, it is yet a larger improvement of thy beneficence; for this faculty hath some power to manage life, and makes it capable to affect those means which may tend to the preservation of it, and to decline the contrary.

But this is no other than the brute creatures enjoy equally with us, and some of them beyond us: that therefore, to our sense thou hast blessed us with a further addition of reason, it is yet a higher pitch of munificence: for hereby we are men; and, as such, are able to attain some knowledge of thee, our Creator; to observe the motions of the heavens; to search into the natures of our fellow-creatures; to pass judgment upon actions and events, and to transact these earthly affairs to our own best advantage.

But, when all this is done, woe were to us, if we were but men! for our corrupted reason renders us of all creatures the most miserable: that, therefore, to our reason thou hast superadded faith; to our nature, grace; and, of men, hast made us

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Christians; and to us, as such, hast given thy Christ, thy Spirit; and thereby made us, of enemies, sons and heirs, co-heirs with Christ of thine eternal and most glorious kingdom of heaven; yea, hast incorporated us into thyself, and made us one spirit with thee our God; Lord, what room can there be possibly in these strait and narrow hearts of ours for a due admiration of thy transcendent love and mercy!

I am swallowed up, O God, I am willingly swallowed up, in this bottomless abyss of thine infinite love: and there let me dwell in a perpetual ravishment of spirit, till, being freed from this clog of earth, and filled with the fulness of Christ, I shall be admitted to enjoy that which I cannot now reach to wonder at, thine incomprehensible bliss and glory, which thou hast laid up in the highest heavens for them that love thee, in the blessed communion of all thy saints and angels, thy cherubim and seraphim, thrones, dominions, and principalities and powers, in the beatifical presence of thee, the ever-living God, the eternal Father of spirits, Father, Son, Holy Ghost, one infinite Deity, in three, co-essentially, co-eternally, co-equally, glorious Persons: to whom be blessing, honour, glory, and power, for ever and ever. Amen. Hallelujah.

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SELECT THOUGHTS:

OR

CHOICE HELPS FOR A PIOUS SPIRIT,

A CENTURY OF DIVINE BREATHINGS FOR A RAVISHED SOUL, BEHOLDING THE EXCELLENCIES OF HER

LORD JESUS.

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER,

GRACE AND PEACE.

It pleased the all-wise and holy God, who orders all events to his own glory, to make use of my late secession for the production of divers, not, I hope, unprofitable tractates; wherein I much rejoice that my declined age, even in that retiredness, might be in any measure serviceable to his Church. Now I send these Select Notions after their fellows; of which I wish you may find cause to say, with the wedding guests at Cana, *Thou hast reserved the best wine till now.*

The intent of this labour is, to put some good thoughts, reader, into thy mind, which would not otherwise, perhaps, have tendered themselves to thee; such as, I hope, may not a little further thee on thy journey to heaven. And if in my labouring thitherward, I shall, through God's mercy, be a means of forwarding any soul but some steps up that steep way, how happy am I!

To which purpose, I know no means more effectual than those Meditations which conduce to the animation and vigour of Christian practice: such I have propounded to myself as most behoveful and necessary, especially for this age into which we are fallen; an age of more brain than heart, and that hath almost lost piety in the chase of some litigious truths. And surely, had I known how better to have placed my hours, I should gladly have changed my task; but I must needs say, I have found this employment so useful and proper, as that I have looked upon those polemical discourses which have been forced from me as no better than mere excursions. I wis it will be long enough ere we shall wrangle ourselves into heaven: it must be true contrition, pure consciences, holy affections, heavenly dispositions, hearty devotions, sound regeneration, faith working by love, an humble walking with God, that shall help us thither; and whatsoever may tend to the advancing of any of these gracious works in us, is worthy to be dear and precious.

Such passages, reader, if thou shalt, according to my hopes, meet with here, bless God with me, and improve them to the best advantage of thy soul. Thus shall our gain be mutual, and our account happy in the day of the Lord Jesus; in whom, farewell.

From Higham, near Norwich,
Feb. 7, 1647.

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SELECT THOUGHTS.

I.—If miracles be ceased, yet marvels will never cease. There is no creature in the world wherein we may not see enough to wonder at; for there is no worm of the earth, no spire of grass, no leaf, no twig, wherein we may not see the footsteps of a Deity. The best visible creature is man: now what man is he that can make but an hair or a straw, much less any sensitive creature? So as no less than an infinite power is seen in every object that presents itself to our eyes. If therefore we look only upon the outsides of these bodily substances, and do not see God in every thing, we are no better than brutish; making use merely of our sense, without the least improvement of our faith or our reason. Contrary then to the opinion of those men who hold that a wise man should admire nothing, I say that a man truly wise and good should admire every thing; or rather, that infiniteness of wisdom and omnipotence which shows itself in every visible object. Lord, what a beast am I, that I have suffered mine eyes to be taken up with shapes and colours and quantities, and have not looked deeper at thee with awful adoration and wonder, in every parcel of thy great creation! Henceforth, let me see nothing but thee, and look at all visible things but as the mere shadows of a glorious Omnipotence.

II.—Our affections are then only safe and right when they are deduced from God, and have their rise from heaven. Then only can I take comfort of my love, when I can love my wife, my child, my friend, myself, my pleasures, and whatsoever contentments in God. Thus I may be sure not to offend, either in the object or measure. No man can, in God, love whom he should not, nor immoderately love whom he should: this holy respect doth both direct and limit him, and shuts up his delights in the conscience of a lawful fruition. The like must be said of our joy and fear and grief, and whatever other affection; for we cannot derive our joy from God, if we place it upon any sinful thing, or if we exceed in the measure of things allowed; we cannot fetch our fear from heaven, if it be cowardly and desperate; nor our grief, if it be merely worldly and heartless. And if our affections do begin

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from above, they will surely end there, closing up in that God who is the author and orderer of them. And such as our affections are, such will be the whole disposition of the soul, and the whole carriage of our actions; these are the feet of the soul, and which way the feet walk the whole man goes. Happy is the man that can be so far the master of himself, as to entertain no affections but such as he takes upon the rebound from heaven!

III.—Whence is this delicate scent in the rose and violet? It is not from the root, that smells of nothing; not from the stalk, that is as senseless as the root; not from the earth whence it grows, which contributes no more to these flowers than to the grass that grows by them; not from the leaf; not from the bud, before it be disclosed, which yields no more fragrance than the leaf or stalk or root: yet here I now find it; neither is it here by any miraculous way, but in an ordinary course of nature, for all violets and roses of this kind yield the same redolence: it cannot be, but that it was potentially in that root and stem from which the flowers proceed; and there placed, and thence drawn, by that Almighty power which hath given these admirable virtues to several plants, and educes them in his due seasons to these excellent perfections. It is the same hand that works spiritually in his elect: out of the soil of the renewed heart, watered with the dew of heaven and warmed with the beams of his Spirit, God can, and in his own season doth, bring forth those sweet odours of grace and holy dispositions which are most pleasing to himself; and if those excellencies be so closely lodged in their bosoms, that they do not discover themselves at all times, it should be no more strange to us, than that this rose and violet are not to be found but in their own months; it is enough that the same virtue is still in the root, though the flower be vanished.

IV.—A man that looks at all things through the consideration of eternity makes no more of a man than of a flower; that lasts some days, he lasts some years; at their period both fade. Now what difference is there to be made betwixt days and years in the thoughts of an eternal duration? Herein therefore I have a great advantage of a carnal heart. Such a one, bounding his narrow conceits with the present condition, is ready to admire himself and others for what they have or are, and is therefore dejected upon every miscarriage; whereas I behold myself, or that man in all his glory, as vanishing; only measuring every man's felicity by the hopes and interest which he hath in a blessed eternity.

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V.—When I am dead and forgotten, the world will be as it is; the same successions and varieties of seasons; the same revolutions of heaven; the same changes of earth and sea; the like occurrents of natural events and human affairs. It is not in my power to alter the course of things, or to prevent what must be. What should I do, but quietly take my part of the present, and humbly leave the care of the future to that all-wise providence which ordereth all things, even the most cross events, according to his most holy and just purposes?

VI.—The Scripture is the sun, the Church is the clock, whose hand points us to, and whose sound tells us the hours of the day. The sun we know to be sure and regularly constant in his motion; the clock, as it may fall out, may go too fast or too slow. We are wont to look at and listen to the clock, to know the time of the day; but where we find the variation sensible, to believe the sun against the clock, not the clock against the sun. As then we would condemn him of much folly, that should profess to trust the clock rather than the sun; so we cannot but justly tax the miscredulity of those who will rather trust to the Church than to the Scripture.

VII.—What marvellous high respects hath God given to man above all his other visible creatures! what an house hath he put him into! how gorgeously arched, how richly pavemented! Wherefore serves all the furniture of heaven and earth but for his use! What delicate provision hath that bountiful hand made for his palate, both of meats and liquors, by land and sea! What rich ornaments hath he laid up for him in his wardrobe of earth and waters! And wherefore serves the various music of birds but to please his ear! for, as for the brute creatures, all harmony to them is but as silence. Wherefore serves the excellent variety of flowers, surpassing Solomon in all his glory, but to please his eye! Mere grass is more acceptable to beasts. Yea, what creature but he is capable to survey God's wonders in the deep! to contemplate the great fabric of the heavens! to observe the glorious bodies and regular motions of the sun, moon, stars! And, which exceeds all conceivable mercies, who but he is capable of that celestial glory which is within that beautiful contignation! to be a companion of the blessed angels; yea, to be a limb of the mystical body of the eternal Son of God, and to partake with him of his everlasting and incomprehensible glory! *Lord, what is man, that thou art thus mindful of him?* And how utterly unworthy

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are we even of common mercies, if we return not to our God more advantage of glory than those poor creatures that were made for us, and which cannot in nature be sensible of his favours!

VIII.—How plain is it that all sensitive things are ordered by an instinct from their Maker! He that gives them being puts into them their several dispositions, inclinations, faculties, operations. If we look to birds; the mavis, the blackbird, the redbreast, have throats tunable to any note, as we daily see they may be taught strains utterly varying from their natural tones; yet they all naturally have the same songs and accents, different from each other, and fully according to their own kind; so as every mavis hath the same ditty with his fellows. If we mark the building of their nests, each kind observes its own fashion and materials; some clay, others moss, hair, sticks; yea, if their very motions and restings, they are conform to their own feather, different from others. If to beasts, they all, untaught, observe the fashions of their several kinds. Galen observes, that when he was dissecting a she goat big with young, a kid, then ready to be yeaned, starts out, and walks up and down the room; and there being in the same place set several vessels of oil, honey, water, milk, the new fallen kid smells at them all, and refusing the rest, falls to lapping of the milk; whereupon he justly infers, that nature stays not for a teacher. Neither is it other in flies, and all sorts of the meanest vermin. All bees build alike, and order the commonwealth of their hive in one manner: all ants keep their own way, in their housing, journeys, provisions: all spiders do as perfectly and uniformly weave their web, as if they had been apprentices to the trade. The same instincts are seen also in the rational creatures, although in most cases overruled by their higher faculties. What an infinite Providence then is this we live under, that hath distributed to every creature, as a several form, so several inclinations, qualities, motions, proper to their own kind, and different from other; and keeps them in this constant uniformity and variety for the delight and contentment of man! O God, that I could be capable of enough wondering at thy great works! that I could be enough humbled under the sense of my own incapacity! that I could give thee so much more glory as I find more vileness in myself!

IX.—When I saw my precious watch (now through an unhappy fall grown irregular) taken asunder, and lying scattered upon the workman's shopboard; so as here lay a wheel, there the balance;

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here one gimmer, there another; straight my ignorance was ready to think, when and how will all these ever piece together again in their former order? But when the skilful artisan had taken it a while in hand, and curiously pinned the joints, it now began to return to its wonted shape and constant motion, as if it had never been disordered. How could I choose but see in this the just emblem of a distempered church and state? wherein, if all seemed disjointed, and every wheel laid aside by itself, so as an unknowing beholder would despair of a redress; yet, if it shall please the great Artist of heaven to put his hand unto it, how soon might it return to an happy resettlement! Even so, blessed Lord, for thy great mercy's sake, make up the breaches of thy Sion, and repair the ruins of thy Jerusalem.

X.—We are, and we are not, all one man's children. Our bodies once met in one root, but our minds and dispositions do so differ, as if we had never been of kin. One man is so gentle and plausible, that he would fain please all; another is so churlish and dogged, that he cares not whom he displeases, and hardly can be well pleased with himself: one, so sparing and pinching, that he grudges himself necessaries; another, so vainly lavish, that he cares not how he squanders his estate: one is tenderly pitiful; another, mercilessly cruel; one, religiously devout; another, wildly profane: one, cowardly fearful; another, desperately courageous: one, jovially cheerful and lightsome; another, sad and dumpish, even to stupidity: one, petulant and wanton; another, austerely continent: one, humble and low-conceited of rich endowments; another, swollen big with a little. He did never read men to purpose, that is too much troubled with the harsh and unpleasing contrariety of humours which he meets with in the world; and he shall be too unthankful to God, that, finding himself better composed than others, knows not whither to ascribe it; and too neglective of himself, that, finding his own distempered, labours not to rectify it.

XI.—Nature, Law, and Grace divide all the ages of the world. Now, as it is in man, who is a lesser world, that in every day there is a resemblance of his whole life; the morning is his childhood, the midway his youth, the evening his old age; so is it in this greater world. The dim break of day was the state of nature, and this was the nonage of the world, wherein the light of knowledge, both of human and divine things, was but weak and obscure. The sun was risen higher in the state of the law, but yet not

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without thick mists and shadows, till the high noon of that true Sun of Righteousness, who personally shone forth to the world: upon whose vertical point began the age of grace that still continues, which is the clear afternoon and full vigour of the world, though now in its sensible declination: after this, there shall be no time, but eternity. These then are they which both the prophets and apostles have styled *the last days;* not only in respect of the times that went before them, but in regard that no time shall follow them. Neither have we reason to boggle at the large latitude of sixteen hundred years; there was neither of the two other periods of age but were longer than this. Besides, however childhood and youth have their fixed terms, which they ordinarily pass not, yet the duration of old age is indefinite. We have in our youth known some gray heads that have continued vigorous till we have lived to match them in the colour of their livery. And if this be, as it is, the evening of the world, do we not see much difference of time in the shutting in of the light? A summer's evening is a winter's day. But if these were to the apostles the last days, how can they be other than in the last hour, yea, the last minute unto us? Why do we not put ourselves into a constant expectation of the end of all things, and set ourselves in a meet posture for the receipt of our returning Saviour?

XII.—It is a feeling and experimental expression that the apostle gives of a Christian, that he *looks not on the things which are seen,* 2 Cor. iv. 18. Not that his eyes are so dim as old Isaac's, that he cannot discern them; or that his inward senses are so stupified, that he cannot judge of their true value; but that, taking an exact view of these earthly things, he descries so much vanity in them, as that he finds them not worthy to be looked at with the full bent of his desires: like as it is not the mere sight of a strange beauty that is forbidden, for a man may as well look upon a fair face as upon a good picture; but a settled and fixed aspect, that feeds the eye, and draws the heart to a sinful concupiscence. Thus doth not the Christian look upon the things that are seen, as making them the full scope and aim of his desires and affections: so far he takes notice of them, as to make his best, that is lawful and moderate, use of them; not so as to make them the chief object of his contemplation, the main drift of his cares. It is well observed by St. Basil, that as there are two contrary ways, the broad and the narrow, so there are two guides, as contrary, sense and faith. Sense presents to us the pleasing delights of this

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world, on the one side; on the other, the present afflictions and persecutions that attend a good profession: faith lays before us the glorious things of a future life, and the endless miseries and torments abiding for sinful souls in the world to come. Now it is not for every one to deny all credit to his sense, alluring him with all pleasant and visible pleasures, and discouraging him with the terror and pain of present and visible afflictions: and to yield himself, hoodwinked, to be led by faith; forepromising only better things afar off, and foreadmonishing him of dangers future and invisible. Faith only is that heroical virtue which makes a man, with an holy contempt, to overlook all the pleasing baits of the world; and with a brave courage and fortitude, to despise all the menaces and painful inflictions of his present fury. This works our eyes not to look upon the things which we cannot but see, the present shows of the world, whether alluring or terrifying. Had Lot but looked back on Sodom, the pleasant plain of Sodom, that lay like the garden of God behind his back, he had never escaped into the mountain. Had the glorious protomartyr fixed his eyes only upon his persecutors, his heart could not but have failed to see the fire in their faces, the sparkling of their eyes, the grinding of their teeth, the bending of their brows, the stopping of their ears, their furious running upon him, their violent halings and draggings, and lastly, a whole volley of stones discharged mortally upon him: he had been utterly daunted with such an impetuosity of death: but he, as not seeing any of this pomp and ostentation of horror, looks up steadfastly to heaven, and there sees that which might well make him blind to all other visible objects, the heavens open, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and upon this sight he shut up his eyes and slept. The true Christian, then, hath, with holy Job, made a covenant with his eyes, not to look upon either the cruel insolencies of the raging world with fear and dejectedness, or on the tempting vanities of the world with amorous glances, but with a sober and constant resolution entertains the objects of both kinds. Very justly did Tertullian jeer that heathen philosopher who pulled out his eyes to avoid concupiscence; and can tell him, that a Christian can hold his eyes, and yet behold beauty unbewitched, and can be at once open-eyed to nature and blind to lust: and what the apostle said of the use he can practise of the sight of the world and earthly objects; he can so behold them as if he beheld them not. How oft have we, in a deep study, fixed our eyes upon that which we

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the while thought not upon, neither perceived that we saw! So doth the Christian to these worldly glories, pleasures, profits; while his mind and affections are on *the things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God,* Col. iii. 1. There, Lord, let me behold those things which cannot yet be seen, but shall once, in the sight of them, make me blessed; and let me *not look on the things that are seen: for the things that are seen are temporary; but the things which are not seen are eternal,* 2 Cor. iv. 18.

XIII.—There is not more strangeness than significance in that charge of the apostle, that we should *put on the Lord Jesus Christ,* Rom. xiii. 14, Gal. iii. 27. The soul is as it were a body; not really and properly so, according to the gross error of Tertullian, but by way of allusion. This body of the soul then may not be naked, but must be clad: as our first parents were ashamed of their bodily nakedness, and so still are all their not savage posterity, so may we of our spiritual. Every sinner is naked; those rags that he hath are so far from hiding his nakedness, that they are part of it: his fairest moralities are but glittering sins, and his sins are his nakedness. Aaron *had made Israel naked to their shame,* Exod. xxxii. 25; not so much in that they were stript of their earrings, as that they were enwrapped in the sin of idolatry. No marvel if we run away and hide us from the presence of God, as our first parents did, while we are guilty to ourselves of our spiritual deformity. As, then, we are bodily naked when we come into the world, so we are spiritually naked while we are of the world; neither can it be either safe or comely for us till we be covered. There is no clothing can fit the soul but the Lord Jesus Christ: all other robes, in the wardrobe of earth or heaven, are too short, too strait; like those which the scorn of Hanun put upon David's messengers, reaching but to the hams: for though the soul of man be finite, the sin of the soul is scarce so; and that sin must be covered, else there can be no safety for the soul; according to that of the Psalmist, *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered,* Psalm xxxii. 1. None therefore but the robes of an infinite righteousness can cover the soul so wofully dressed: none therefore but the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God blessed for ever, can cover the soul, that it may not appear unrighteous; or can cleanse the soul, that it may not be unrighteous; and cleansed it must be, ere the Lord Jesus can be put on: we shall wrong his perfect holiness if we think we can slip him on as

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a case over our beastly rags. It is with us as with Joshua the high priest; the filthy garments must first be taken off; and then the Lord shall say unto us, *Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment,* Zech. iii. 4. We put on a garment when we apply it all over to our body; so as that part which is clothed appears not, but is defended from the air and from the eye: if we have truly put on the Lord Jesus, nothing of ours is seen, but Christ is all in all to us: although this application goes yet deeper; for we so put him on, that we not only put ourselves into him, but also put him into ourselves, by a mutual kind of spiritual incorporation. We put him on, then, upon our intellectual parts, by knowing him, by believing on him: *This is eternal life, to know thee, and whom thou hast sent,* saith our Saviour: and for faith, no grace doth so sensibly apprehend him, and make him so feelingly ours. We put him on upon our wills and affections, when we take pleasure in him, when we love him, delight in him, and prefer him to our chiefest joy. Thus do we put him on, as our Lord, in our humble and dutiful subjection; as our Jesus, in our faithful affiance; as Christ, the anointed of God; to be our King, in all holy obedience; our Priest, in our willing consecration to him; our Prophet, in our cheerful readiness to be instructed by him. How happy are we if we be thus decked: we prank up these poor carcasses of ours gayly, with no small expense, and when we have done, the stuff, or the fashion, or both, wears out to nothing; but here is a garment that will never be out of fashion: *Jesus Christ, yesterday, and to day, and the same for ever;* yea, the same to us: here we put him on in grace, there in eternal glory. The Israelites were forty years in the wilderness, yet their shoes not worne, their apparel not impaired, Deut. xxix. 5; but this attire shall not only hold good in the time of our wandering in this desert, but after we are come into the Canaan of glory, and is best at last. Wherefore do we put on our choicest attire, on some high days, but to testify the cheerfulness of our hearts? *Let thy garment be white,* saith the preacher; *for God now accepteth thy works,* Eccles. ix. 7, 8. Mephibosheth changed not his raiment since David went out, as one that would have the sorrow of his heart seen in the neglect of his clothes; although many a one, under a gay coat, hath an heavy heart: but this attire doth not only testify, but make cheerfulness in the soul; *Thou hast given me more joy of heart than they had in the time that*

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their corn and their wine increased, Psalm iv. 7: and, *In thy presence is the fulness of joy,* Psalm xvi. 11. What can this apparel of ours do but keep us from a blast or a shower? It is so far from safeguarding the soul, that it many times wounds it, and that to the death. It was one of the main quarrels against the rich glutton, that he was every day clothed in purple and byss, Luke xvi. 19. How many souls shall once wish that their bodies had been ever either naked or clad with haircloth! But this array, as it is infinitely rich and beautiful, so it is as surely defensative of the soul, and is no less than armour of proof against all assaults, all miseries, Eph. vi. 13. What a deal of cost and pains do we bestow upon these wretched bodies of ours, only to make them pleasing and lovely to the eye of some beholders, as miserable, perhaps, as ourselves! and yet, when we have all done, we are, it may be, no better than hard favoured and unhandsome creatures, and contemptible in those eyes from whom we desired most approbation. Jezebel, for all her licking, is cast out of the window, and trodden to dirt in the streets. But this robe we cannot wear and not be amiable in the eyes of the Holiest; *Behold, thou art fair, my beloved; behold, thou art fair, and there is no spot in thee,* Cant. i. 15. Lo, in this case the apparel makes the man. Neither is it in the power of any spiritual deformity to make us other than lovely in the sight of our God, while we have Christ put on upon us. Whatever therefore become of the outward man, let it be my care that my soul be vested with my Lord Jesus; so shall I be sure to be safe, rich, amiable here, and hereafter glorious. It was part of our Saviour's charge upon the Mount, *Take no care what to put on;* but it must be the main care of our lives how to put on Christ upon our souls. This is the prime stole, wherewith the father of the prodigal graceth his returned son. The heaven of heavens is not worth such another. When I have once got this on my back, I shall say, though in a contrary sense, with the spouse in the Canticles, *I have put* on *my coat, how shall I put it* off? *I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?* Cant. v. 3.

XIV.—With how devout passion doth the Psalmist call to all the works of the Almighty to praise him! as well supposing that every creature, even those that have no tongues to speak for themselves, yet have a tongue to praise their Maker: *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth his speech, and night unto*

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night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech where their voice is not heard, Psalm xix. 1, 2, 3. Neither is the very earth defective in this duty: every plant says, "Look on me, and acknowledge the life, colour, form, smell, fruit, force, that I have, from the power of my Creator;" every worm and fly says, "Look on me, and give God the praise of my living, sense, and motion:" every bird says, "Hear me, and praise that God who hath given me these various feathers, and taught me these several notes:" every beast, while he bellows, bleats, brays, barks, roars, says, "It is God that hath given me this shape, this sound:" yea, the very mute fishes are in their very silence vocal, in magnifying the infinite wisdom and power of him that made them, and placed them in those watery habitations: *Let every thing that hath breath,* saith the Psalmist, *praise the Lord,* Psalm cl. 6. Yea, the very winds whistle and the sea roars out the praise of the Almighty, who both raises and allays them at pleasure. What a shame were it for man, to whom alone God hath given an understanding heart, a nimble tongue, and articulate language, wherein he can express his rational thoughts, to be wanting to his so universal devotion, and to be as insensible of the great works of God as the ground that he treads upon! If others shall be thus unthankfully dumb, yet, *Praise thou the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name. While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises to my God whilst I have any being,* Psalm ciii. 1; cxlvi. 2. But, alas! Lord, thou knowest I cannot so much as will to praise thee without thee: do thou fill my heart with holy desires, and my mouth with songs of thanksgiving.

XV.—It may seem a strange errand upon which our Saviour tells us he came into the world: *I am come to send fire on the earth,* Luke xii. 49. When the two fervent disciples would have had fire sent down from heaven upon but a Samaritan village, our Saviour rebuked them, and told them, they knew not of what spirit they were; yet here he makes it his own business to send fire on earth. Alas! may we think, we have fire too much already! how happy were it rather if the fire which is kindled in the world were well quenched! And what is the main drift of the prince of darkness but fire? if not to send fire down from heaven upon the inhabitants of the earth, yet to send the inhabitants of the earth down to the fire of hell. As, then, we find divers kinds of material fire, celestial, elementary, domestic, artificial, natural; so there is

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no less variety of spiritual fires. It was in fiery cloven tongues wherein the Holy Ghost descended upon the apostles in their Pentecost, Acts ii. 3; and even this fire did our Saviour come to send down on the earth, John xvi. 7. Thy word was in me as fire, saith the prophet, Jer. v. 14; and, *Did not our hearts burn within us*, said the two disciples, in their walk to Emmaus, *while he talked with us?* Luke xxiv. 32: this fire he also came to send. Heavenly love and holy zeal are fire: *Many waters cannot quench love*, Cant. viii. 7: *My zeal hath consumed me*, saith the Psalmist, Psalm cxix. 139: and these fires our Saviour came to send into the hearts of men. Holy thoughts are no other than the beams of celestial fire: *My heart was hot within me: while I was musing, the fire burned*, Psalm xxxix. 3; and these we know he sends. *He maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire*, Psalm civ. 4; Heb. i. 7: these he sends forth to the earth, *to minister for them that shall be heirs of salvation*, Heb. i. 14. Besides these, afflictions and persecutions are fire: *We have passed through fire and water*, Psalm lxvi. 12. *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as if some strange thing had happened to you*, 1 Pet. iv. 12: and even these are of his sending; *The Lord hath kindled a fire in Zion, and it hath devoured the foundation thereof*, Lam. iv. 11. There is no evil in the city, but the Lord hath done it: *The Lord hath done that which he hath devised: he hath thrown down, and not pitied*, Lam. ii. 17. But this expression of our Saviour goes yet deeper, and alludes to the effect of separation which follows upon the fire of our trial. When the lump of ore is put into the furnace, the fire tries the pure metal from the dross, and makes an actual division of the one from the other; so doth Christ by his Word and Spirit. Even he that is the Prince and God of peace comes to set division in the world. Surely there are holy quarrels, worthy of his engagement; for as the flesh lusteth and warreth against the spirit, so the spirit fighteth against the flesh: and this duel may well beseem God for the Author and the Son of God for the setter of it; these second blows make an happy fray. Nothing is more properly compared than discord to fire, Judges ix. 20. This Christ (the first thing he does) sets in every heart; there is all quietness, secure ease, and self-contentment in the soul, till Christ come there. How should it be other, when Satan sways all without resistance? but when once Christ offers to enter, there are straight civil wars in the soul betwixt

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the old man and the new; and it fares with the heart as with an house divided in itself, wherein the husband and the wife are at variance; nothing is to be heard but unquiet janglings, open brawlings, secret opposition; the household takes part, and professes a mutual vexation. This spiritual self-division, wherever it is, though it be troublesome, yet it is cordial: it puts the soul into the state of Rebekah's womb, which, barren, yielded no pain; but when an Esau and Jacob were conceived and struggling within, yielded, for the time, no ease: yet this was that which caused her just joy, that she had not so much children as nations in her womb: even so the trouble of this inward conflict is abundantly requited with the joy of this assurance, that now Christ is come into our soul, and is working his own desired ends in and upon us. Let vain and sensual hearts please themselves in their inward peace and calmness; there cannot be a greater sign of gracelessness and disfavour of God: *When they shall say, Peace, peace, then shall come upon them sudden destruction.* The old word was, "No safety in war;" here it is contrary. It is this intestine war of the heart, with fire and sword to our corruptions, that must bring us true rest for the present, and hereafter eternal peace and happiness. Now, Lord, since it is thy desire that this fire should be kindled, kindle thou and inflame my heart with a fervent desire and endeavour, that this thy desire may be accomplished in me. Set me at war with myself, that I may be at peace with thee.

XVI.—In all that we have to do with God, he justly requires and expects from us an awful disposition of heart towards his infiniteness. Hereupon it was that he delivered his Law in thunder, fire, smoke, and all dreadful magnificence; and when, upon the same day, he would send down his Spirit for the propagation of the Gospel, it was done with an astonishing majesty, with a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and with the apparition of cloven and fiery tongues, Acts ii. 2, 3. And as it was thus in the descent of the Holy Ghost in the miraculous gifts, so it is in the sanctifying graces; seldom ever doth God by them seize upon the heart but with a vehement concussion going before. That of St. Paul's conversion was extraordinary and miraculous; but in some degree it is thus in every soul; we are struck down first, and are made sensible of our spiritual blindness, ere our full call be accomplished. As it was with Elijah in the mount of Horeb, there came first a strong wind, that tore the rocks and mountains,

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and after that an earthquake, then a fire, before the still small voice: so it is usually in our breasts; ere the comfortable voice of God's Spirit speak to our hearts, there must be some blusterings and flashes of the Law. It is our honour and his favour that we are allowed to love God: it is our duty to fear him. We may be too familiar in our love; we cannot be too awful in our fear.

XVII.—All valuations of these outward things are arbitrary, according to the opinion of their pleasure or their rarity, or the necessity of their use. Did not men's minds set a price upon metals, what were they better than some other entrails of the earth, or one better than other? If by public law the mint were ordained to be only supplied by our stannaries, how currently would they pass for more precious than silver mines! To an Indian, a bracelet of worthless beads is estimated above his gold: an hungry Esau values a mess of pottage above his birthright. In the siege of Samaria, an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and a cab of doves' dung for five pieces, 2 Kings vi. 25. We have heard, that those of Angola have valued a dog at the price of many slaves. In all these earthly commodities, the market rises and falls according to conceit and occasion; neither is there any intrinsecal and settled worth in any of them: only spiritual things, as virtue and grace, are good in themselves, and so carry their infinite value in them, that they make their owner absolutely rich and happy. When therefore I see a rich man hugging his bags and admiring his wealth, I look upon that man with pity, as knowing the poorness of that pelf wherein he placeth his felicity; neither can I behold him with other eyes than those wherewith a discreet European sees a savage Indian priding himself in those trifles which our children have learned to contemn. On the other side, when I see a man rich in the endowments of mind, well fraught with knowledge, eminent in goodness, and truly gracious, I shall rise up to that man, how homely soever his outside be, as the most precious and excellent piece which this world can afford.

XVIII.—Should I but see an angel, I should look, with Manoah, to die no other death than the sight of that glory; and yet even that angel is fain to hide his face, as not able to behold the infinite Majesty of God his Creator. When Moses did but talk with God in the mount for forty days, his face did so shine that the Israelites could not look upon the lustre of his countenance: even the very presence of the Divine Majesty not only hath, but communicates glory. Lord, that I could see but some glimpse of

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the reflection of those glorious beams of thine upon my soul, how happy should I be in this vision, whose next degree is perfectly beatifical!

XIX.—As good, so evil, is apt to be communicative of itself; and this so much more, as it meets with subjects more capable of evil than good. The breath of a plague-sick man taints the air round about him; yea, the very sight of blear eyes infects the sound, and one yawning mouth stretcheth many jaws. How many have we known, that have been innocent in their retiredness, miserably debauched with lewd conversation! Next to being good, is, to consort with the virtuous. It is the most merciful improvement of an holy power, to separate the precious from the vile; it is the highest praise of a constant goodness, for a Lot to be righteous in the midst of Sodom.

XX.—We are all apt to put off the blame of our miscarriages from ourselves. Even in paradise we did so: *It was the woman*, saith Adam: *It was the serpent*, saith the woman. How have we heard fond gamesters cast the blame of their ill luck upon the standers by, which intermeddled nothing but by a silent eyesight! So the idolatrous pagans of old, though flagitiously wicked, yet could impute their public judgments to none but the Christians, whose only innocence was their protection from utter ruin. So foolishly partial doth our self-love render us to our own demerits, that all are guilty save ourselves. Yea, rather than we will want shifts, our very stars shall be blamed; which are no more accessary to our harms, than our eyes are to the eclipses of their most eminent lights. As, on the contrary, we are ready to arrogate unto ourselves those blessings which the mere bounty of Divine Providence hath cast upon us, whereto we could not contribute so much as an hand to receive them but by the mercy of the Giver. It cannot be well with me till I have learned to correct this palpable injustice in both; challenging to myself all my errors and guilt of sufferings, and yielding to God the praise of his own free and gracious beneficence.

XXI.—How profitable and beneficial a thing is affliction, especially to some dispositions more than other! I see some trees that will not thrive, unless their roots be laid bare; unless, besides pruning, their bodies be gashed and sliced: others, that are too luxuriant, except divers of their blossoms be seasonably pulled off, yield nothing. I see too rank corn, if it be not timely eaten down, may yield something to the barn, but little to the granary.

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I see some full bodies, that can enjoy no health without strong evacuations, blood-lettings, fontanels. Such is the condition of our spiritual part: it is a rare soul that can be kept in any constant order without these smarting remedies: I confess mine cannot: how wild had I run, if the rod had not been over me! Every man can say he thanks God for ease: for me, I bless God for my troubles.

XXII.—When I consider what an insensible atom man is, in comparison of the whole body of the earth, and what a mere centrepoint the earth is, in comparison of the vast circumference of heaven; and what an almost infinite distance there is betwixt this point the earth, and that large circle of the firmament; and therewithal think of the innumerable number and immense greatness of those heavenly luminaries; I cannot but apprehend how improbable it is, that those stars should, at such a distance, distinguish betwixt one man and another; betwixt one limb of the same body and another; betwixt one spot of earth and another; and, in so great a mixture and confusion of influences, should give any distinct intimation of particular events in nature, and much more of mere contingencies of arbitrary affairs. As for the moon, by reason of her vicinity to the earth, and sensible predominance over moisture; and for the sun, the great magazine of light and heat; I acknowledge their powerful, but unpartial, operations upon this whole globe of earth and waters, and every part of it, not without just wonder and astonishment: the other stars may have their several virtues and effects; but their marvellous remoteness, and my undiscernible nothingness, may seem to forbid any certain intelligence of their distinct workings upon me. But, whether these glorious lights give or take any notice of such an imperceptible mite as I, sure I am there is great reason I should take notice of them; of their beauteous lustre, of their wonderful magnitude, of their regular motion; and be transported with admiration of that omnipotent power, wisdom, providence, which created this goodly and mighty host of heaven; and guides them in their constant march, without the least deviation, from their first setting out to the last moment of their final conflagration. O the narrowness of my wretched heart, that affords not room enough for wonder at that which I cannot but see!

XXIII.—It becomes not us to be niggardly, where our Saviour intends bounty. How glad should we be rather to ampliate the

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benefit of the great work of our Redeemer! But, surely, I cannot see upon what warrant that favour is grounded that enlargeth the fruit of Christ's redemption to the angels: the good needed it not; the evil were not capable of it: only mankind was captived, and redeemable by that invaluable ransom. Doubtless, those blessed spirits have their part in the joy and gratulation of the infinite mercy of our deliverance: for if they rejoice at the conversion of one sinner, what triumph do we think there is in heaven at the universal redemption of all believers! The propriety of this favour hath reason to engage us so much the more. Lord, thy mercy is free and boundless: thou wouldest pass by the lapsed angels, and leave them in their sin and their chains; and only rescue miserable men out of their hell. O for an heart that might be in some measure answerable to so infinite mercy, and that might be no less captived to thy love than it is freed by thy redemption!

XXIV.—Men do commonly wrong themselves with a groundless expectation of good; fore-promising to themselves all fair terms in their proceedings, and all happy success in the issue; boding nothing to themselves but what they wish. Even the man after God's own heart could say, *In my prosperity I said, Tush, I shall never be removed*, Psalm xxx. 6: wherein their misreckoning makes their disappointment so much the more grievous. Had not David made such account of the strength and stability of his mountain, it could not have so much troubled him to have it levelled with the plain. On the contrary, the evils which we look for, fall so much the less heavily, by how much we are fore-prepared for their entertainment. Whatever by-accidents I may meet withal besides, I have two fixed matches, that I must inevitably encounter with, age and death: the one is attended with many inconveniences; the other, with much horror. Let me not flatter myself with hopes of jollity and ease. My comforts for heaven shall, I trust, never fail me: but for the present world, it shall be well for me if I can without too much difficulty scramble out of the necessary miseries of life, and without too much sorrow crawl to my grave.

XXV.—Heaven hath many tongues that talk of it, more eyes to behold it, but few hearts that rightly affect it. Ask any Christian especially, whom ye shall meet with, he will tell you, thither he shapes his course; there he hath pitched his hopes; and would think himself highly wronged by that man who should

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make doubt of either his interest or speed: but if we shall cast our eyes upon the lives of men, or they reflect their eyes upon their own bosoms, the hypocrisy will too palpably discover itself; for, surely, which way soever the faces look, the hands and feet of the most men move hellward. If malice, fraud, cruelty, oppression, injustice, excess, uncleanness, pride, contention, covetousness, lies, heresies, blasphemies, disobedience, be the way thither, woe is me, how many walk in that wide and open road to destruction! But even there, where the heart pretends to innocence, let a man strictly examine his own affections, he shall find them so deeply earthed, that he shall be forced to confess his claim to heaven is but fashionable. Ask thyself but this one question, O man, whatsoever thou art, ask it seriously, "Might I this very hour go to heaven, am I willing and desirous to make a present change of this life for a better?" and tell me sincerely what answer thou receivest from thine own heart. Thy judgment cannot but tell thee, that the place is a thousand times better; that the condition would be infinitely advantageous, to exchange baseness for glory, misery for blessedness, time for eternity, a living death for a life immortal. If thou do now fumble and shuffle and demur upon the resolution, be convinced of thine own worldliness and infidelity; and know, that if thy heart had as much of heaven as thy tongue, thou couldest not but say, with the Chosen Vessel, *I desire to depart hence, and to be with Christ, which is far better,* Phil. i. 23.

XXVI.—There is no earthly pleasure whereof we shall not soon grow weary, and be as willing to intermit as ever we were to entertain it: and if the use of it continue, the very frequency makes it disregarded; so as that which at first we esteemed rare and precious, is now looked upon as common and despicable: and if it be such as that our impetuous affection is too much transported with a present fruition, we are so much the more distempered in the loss. On the contrary, those painful yokes, which at the first imposing seemed insupportable, grow tolerable by custom and long acquaintance: so as, I know not how it comes to pass, that time hath a contrary power, both to aggravate and lighten evils. Those pleasures are only worthy to carry our hearts which are measured by no less than eternity, and those pains most justly formidable which know neither end nor remission.

XXVII.—The nearer our Saviour drew to his glory, the more

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humility he expressed. His followers were first his servants, and he their Master; John xiii. 16: then his disciples, and he their teacher; John xv. 8: soon after, they were his friends, and he theirs; John xv. 14: straightways after his resurrection and entrance into an immortal condition, they were his brethren; *Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father;* John xx. 17: lastly, they are incorporated into him, and made partakers of his glory,—*That they also may be one with us,* saith he, *I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one; and the glory which thou gavest me I have given them;* John xvii. 21, 22, 23. O Saviour, was this done for the depressing of thyself, or for the exaltation of us, or rather for both? How couldest thou more depress thyself than thus to match thyself with us poor wretched creatures! How couldest thou more exalt us, than to raise us unto this entireness with thee, the all-glorious and eternal Son of God! How should we learn of thee to improve our highest advancement to our deepest humility; and so to regard each other, that, when we are greatest, we should be least!

XXVIII.—How apt are we to misconstrue the Spirit of God to our own disadvantage! While the blessed apostle bids us to *work out* our *salvation with fear and trembling,* he doth not bid us to work it out with doubt and distrust. It is the Psalmist's charge, that we should *serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice in him with trembling;* Psalm ii. 11: so as there is a fear without diffidence, and a trembling that may consist with joy: trembling is an effect of fear; but this fear, which we must affect, is reverential, not slavish, not distrustful. Indeed, when we look upon ourselves, and consider our own frailties and corruptions, and God's infinite justice, we have too just cause of doubt and dejection, yea, were it not for better helps, of utter despair: but, when we cast up our eyes to the power of him that hath undertaken for us, and the faithfulness of him that hath promised, and the sure mercies of him that hath begun his good work in us, we can fear with confidence, and rejoice in our trembling. For what are our sins, to his mercies; our unworthiness, to his infinite merits; our weaknesses, to his omnipotence? I will therefore so distrust myself, that I will be stedfastly confident in the God of my salvation: I will so tremble before the glorious majesty of my God, that I may not abate of the joy of his never-failing mercy.

XXIX.—What a large and open hand hath our God! How

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infinitely doth his bounty transcend, not the practice only, but the admiration of man! We think it well, if, upon often asking, we can receive small favours; if, after long delay, we can be gratified with a condescent; and if we have received one courtesy, that is a bar to a second: whereas our munificent God gives us, not only what we ask, but what we ask not, and therefore before we ask. Yea, it is he that gives us to ask: neither could we so much as crave good things, if he did not put into us those holy desires. Yea, he not only gives us blessings before we ask; but he gives us the best things, a right to eternal glory, before we are at all; yea, before the world was. And as he prevents us in time, so he exceeds our thoughts in measure, giving us more than we ask: Rachel would have a son; God gives her two: Abraham sues that Ishmael may live; God gives him to prosper, and to be the father of many princes. Yet more, he gives us what we cannot ask: the dumb demoniac could not sue for himself, his very silence was vocal, and receives what he would and could not request. Yea, lastly, which is the great improvement of his mercy, he gives us against our asking: our ignorance sues against ourselves, requiring hurtful things; he will not suffer our hearts and tongues to wrong us, but withholds what we unfitly crave, and gives us what we should and do not crave: as the fond child cries to his father for a knife; he reaches him a spoon, that may feed and not hurt him. O the ocean of divine bounty, boundless, bottomless! O our wretched unworthiness, if we be either niggardly to ourselves, in not asking blessings; or unthankful to our God, in not acknowledging them.

XXX.—Infidelity and faith look both through the same perspective glass, but at contrary ends. Infidelity looks through the wrong end of the glass, and therefore sees those objects which are near afar off, and makes great things little; diminishing the greatest spiritual blessings, and removing far off from us threatened evils: faith looks at the right end, and brings the blessings that are far off in time close to our eye; and multiplies God's mercies, which, in a distance, lost their greatness. Thus the faithful saw his seed possessed of the promised land, when as yet he had no seed, nor was likely to have any; when the seed which he should have, should not enjoy it till after four hundred years. Thus that good patriarch saw Christ's day, and rejoiced. Thus our first parent comforted himself, after his ejection out of paradise, with the foresight of that blessed seed of the woman which should be exhibited

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almost four thousand years after. Still, and ever, faith is like itself. What use were there of that grace, if it did not fetch home to my eye things future and invisible? That this dissolved body shall be raised out of the dust, and enlived with this very soul wherewith it is now animated; and both of them put into a condition eternally glorious, is as clearly represented to my soul in this glass, as if it were already done: *Faithful is he that hath promised; which will also do it.*

XXXI.—Who can think other than with scorn of that base and unworthy conceit, which hath been entertained by some, that our Saviour lived here on earth upon alms? He that vouchsafed to take upon him the shape of a servant would have hated to take upon him the trade of a beggar: service is a lawful calling, beggary not so. He that gave life to all creatures, could take a maintenance from them without asking. He that did command the fish to bring the tribute-money for himself and his disciples, and could multiply a few loaves and fishes for the relief of thousands, could rather raise a sustenance to himself and his, than beg it. But here was neither need nor cause; even ordinary means failed not; many wealthy followers, who had received cures and miraculous deliverances, besides heavenly doctrine, from him, ministered to him of their substance, Luke viii. 2, 3. Neither was this out of charity, but out of duty: in the charge which he gave to his disciples, when he sent them by pairs to preach abroad, he tells them the labourer is worthy of his wages; and can we think this rule doth not much more hold concerning himself? Had not himself and his family been furnished with a meet stock raised from hence, what purse was it which Judas bore? and how could he be a thief in his office if his bags were empty? He therefore that could say, *It is a more blessed thing to give than to receive,* certainly would not choose, when it was in his power, rather to receive than give. *The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;* and he distributeth it as he pleaseth amongst the children of men. For me, I hope I shall have the grace to be content with whatsoever share shall fall to my lot; but my prayer shall be, that I may beg of none but God.

XXXII.—What a madness it is in us, to presume on our interest in God's favour for the securing of our sinfulness from judgment! The angels were deeper in it than we mortals can ever hope to be in these houses of clay, yet, long since, are ugly devils: and they, which enjoyed the liberty of the glorious heavens, are now

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reserved in everlasting chains of darkness. And if we look down upon earth, what darling had God in the world but Israel? This was his firstborn, his lot, his inheritance; of whom he said, *Here I have a delight to dwell.* And now where is it? O the woful desolations of that select people! What is it to tell of the suffossion of her vineyards? Psalm lxxx. 13; vastation of her tents? Jer. iv. 20; the devouring of her land? Isaiah i. 7; demolition of walls? Psalm lxxxix. 40; breaking down altars? Isaiah xxvii. 9; burning of cities? spoiling of houses? dashing in pieces their children? ravishing their wives? Isaiah xiii. 16; killing of their priests? Psalm lxxviii. 64; eating of their own children of but a span long? Lam. ii. 20; and a thousand such woful symptoms of war? the Psalmist hath said a word for all, (in a just but contrary sense,) *Destructions are come to a perpetual end.* What destruction can be more, when there is no Israel? How is that wretched nation vanished, no man knows whither! So, as it was Jezebel's curse, that nothing was left, whereof it could be said, "This was Jezebel;" so there is not one piece of a man left in all the world of whom we can say, "This was of one of the tribes of Israel." As for those famous churches, which were, since that, honoured with the preaching and pens of the blessed apostles, where are they now to be looked for, but amongst the rubbish of our cursed Mahometism? O that we could not be high-minded, but fear!

XXXIII.—What a woful conversion is here! The sting of death is sin, and the sting of sin is death: both meet in man, to make him perfectly miserable. Death could not have stung us, no, could not have been at all, if it had not been for sin; and sin, though in itself extremely heinous, yet were not so dreadful and horrible, if it were not attended with death. How do we owe ourselves to the mercy of a Saviour, that hath freed us from the evil of both! having pulled out the sting of death, which is sin, that it cannot hurt us; and having taken such order with the sting of sin, which is death, that, instead of hurting, it shall turn beneficial to us. Lord, into what a safe condition hast thou put us! If neither sin nor death can hurt us, what should we fear?

XXXIV.—How unjustly hath the presumption of blasphemous cavillers been wont to cast the envy of their condemnation merely upon the absolute will of an unrespective power! as if the damnation of the creature were only of a supreme will, not of a just merit. The very name of Justice convinces them: a punitive justice cannot but suppose an offence. It is not for us to rack the brains

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and strain the heartstrings of plain honest Christians with the subtleties of distinctions, of a negative and positive reprobation, of causes and consequences; truths meet for the schools: it is enough, that all Christian divines, the synods both of Dort and Trent, agree in this truth, that never man is, was, can be, miserable, but for sin; yea, for his own sin. The prophet tells us so in terms: *Why is the living man sorrowful? man suffereth for his sin,* Lam. iii. 39. Nothing can be more true than that of Bildad the Shuhite, *Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man,* Job viii. 20. *Thy perdition is of thyself, O Israel,* Hosea xiii. 9. It is no less than rank blasphemy, to make God the author of sin: *Thou art the God that hast no pleasure in wickedness; neither shall any evil dwell with thee,* saith the Psalmist, Psalm v. 4. Our sin is our own, and the wages of sin is death; he that doeth the work earns the wages. So then the righteous God is cleared both of our sin and our death; only his justice pays us what we will needs deserve: *Have I any pleasure at all,* saith he, *that the wicked should die? and not that he should return from his ways and live? wherefore return ye, and live,* Ezek. xviii. 23, 32. What a wretched thing is a wilful sinner, that will needs be guilty of his own death! Nothing is more odious amongst men, than for a man to be a felon of himself: besides the forfeiture of his estate, Christian burial is denied him, and he is cast forth into the highway, with a stake pitched through his body, so as every passenger that sees that woful monument is ready to say, "There lies the carcass, but where is the soul?" But so much more heinous is the self-felony of a wilful sinner, because it is immediately acted upon the soul, and carries him, with pleasure, in the ways of an eternal death. O Lord, *cleanse thou me from my secret faults. Keep thy servant also from presumptuous sins, lest they get the dominion over me,* Psalm xix. 12, 13.

XXXV.—We are wont to say, that we ought to give even the devil his due: and surely it is possible for us to wrong that malignant spirit, in casting upon him those evils which are not properly his. It is true that he is the tempter, and both injects evil motions, and draws them forth into act: but yet all ill is not immediately his; we have enough besides of our own. *Every man,* saith St. James, *is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed: then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death,* James i. 14, 15. Lo, both the lust and the seducement are our

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own: the sin is ours, the death ours. There are indeed diabolical suggestions, which are immediately cast into us by that wicked one; but there are carnal temptations, that are raised out of our own corrupt nature; these need not his immediate hand. He was the main agent in our depravation; but, being once depraved, we can act evil of ourselves. And if Satan be the father of sin, our will is the mother; and sin is the cursed issue of both. He could not make our sin without ourselves; we concur to our own undoing. It was the charge of the apostle, that we should not *give place to the devil:* lo, he could not take it, unless we gave it: our will betrays us to his tyranny: in vain shall we cry out of the malice and fraud of wicked spirits while we nourish their complices in our bosoms.

XXXVI.—I cannot but think with what unspeakable joy old Simeon died, when, after long waiting for the consolation of Israel, he had now seen the Lord's Christ; when I hear him say, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* Methinks I should see his soul ready to fly out of his mouth in an heavenly ravishment, and even then upon its wing towards its glory; for now his eyes saw, and his arms embraced, in God's salvation his own, in Israel's glory his own. How gladly doth he now see death, when he hath the Lord of Life in his bosom! Or how can he wish to close up his eyes with any other object? Yet, when I have seriously considered it, I cannot see wherein our condition comes short of his. He saw the child Jesus but in his swathing bands, when he was but now entering upon the great work of our redemption: we see him, after the full accomplishment of it, gloriously triumphing in heaven. He saw him but buckling on his armour, and entering into the lists; we see him victorious: *Who is this, that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this, that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save?* Isaiah lxiii. 1. He could only say, *To us a child is born, to us a son is given,* Isaiah ix. 6: we can say, *Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men,* Psalm lxviii. 18. It is true, the difference is, he saw his Saviour with bodily eyes; we with mental: but the eyes of our faith are no less sure and unfailing than those of sense. Lord, why should not I, whose eyes have no less seen thy salvation, say, Now let thy servant depart, not in peace only, but in a joyful sense of my instant glory?

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XXXVII.—When I think on my Saviour in his agony and on his cross, my soul is so clouded with sorrow, as if it would never be clear again: those bloody drops, and those dreadful ejaculations, methinks, should be past all reach of comfort: but when I see his happy eluctatien out of these pangs, and hear him cheerfully rendering his spirit into the hands of his Father; when I find him trampling upon his grave, attended with glorious angels, and ascending in the chariot of a cloud to his heaven; I am so elevated with joy, as that I seem to have forgotten there was ever any cause of grief in those sufferings. I could be passionate to think, O Saviour, of thy bitter and ignominious death, and, most of all, of thy vehement strugglings with thy Father's wrath for my sake; but thy conquest and glory takes me off, and calls me to hallelujahs of joy and triumph: *Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever*, Rev. v. 13.

XXXVIII.—It is not hard to observe, that the more holy any person is, the more he is afflicted with others' sin. Lot vexed his righteous soul with the unclean conversation of the Sodomites; David's eyes gushed out rivers of water because men kept not the law. Those that can look with dry and undispleased eyes upon another's sin never truly mourned for their own: had they abhorred sin as sin, the offence of a God would have been grievous to them, in whomsoever. It is a godless heart that doth not find itself concerned in God's quarrel, and that can laugh at that which the God of heaven frowns at. My soul is nearest to me; my sorrow therefore for my sin must begin at home: but it may not rest there: from thence it shall diffuse itself all the world over: *Who is offended, and I burn not?* 2 Cor. xi. 29; who offendeth, and I weep not?

XXXIX.—The world little considers the good advantage that is made of sins. Surely the whole church of God hath reason to bless God for Thomas's unbelief; not in the act, which was odious after so good assurances, but in the issue. His doubt proves our evidence; and his confession, after his touch had convinced him, was more noble than his incredulity was shameful. All his attendance upon Christ had not taught him so much divinity as this one touch. Often had he said *My Lord*, but never *My God* till now. Even Peter's confession, though rewarded with the change of his name, came short of this. The flame that is beaten down by the blast of the bellows rises higher than otherwise it would; and the

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spring water, that runs level in the plain, yea, if it fall low, it will therefore rise high: the shaken tree roots the deeper. Not that we should *sin that grace may abound; God forbid:* he can never hope to be good, that will be therefore ill that he may be the better; but that our holy zeal should labour to improve our miscarriages to our spiritual gain, and the greater glory of that Majesty whom we have offended. To be bettered by grace, it is no mastery; but to raise more holiness out of sin is a noble imitation of that holy God who brings light out of darkness, life out of death.

XL.—Every man best knows his own complaints: we look upon the outsides of many whom we think happy, who, in the mean time are secretly wrung with the inward sense of their own concealed sorrows, and, under a smooth and calm countenance, smother many a tempest in their bosom: there are those whose faces smile while their conscience gripes them closely within: there are those that can dissemble their poverty and domestic vexations, reserving their sighs till their back be turned; that can pick their teeth abroad, when they are fasting and hungry at home: and many a one forces a song when his heart is heavy: no doubt Naomi made many a short meal after her return to Bethlehem, yet did not whine to her great kindred in a bemoaning of her want; and good Hannah bit in many a grief, which her insulting rival might not see. On the contrary, there are many, whom we pity as miserable, that laugh in their sleeve, and applaud themselves in their secret felicity, and would be very loath to exchange conditions with those that commiserate them: a ragged cynic likes himself at least as well as a great Alexander: the mortified Christian, that knows both worlds, looks with a kind of contented scorn upon the proud gallant that contemns him, as feeling that heaven within him which the other is not capable to believe. It is no judging of men's real estate by their semblance, nor valuing others' worth by our own rate. And for ourselves, if we have once laid sure grounds of our own inward contentment and happiness, it matters not greatly if we be misknown of the world.

XLI.—For one man to give titles to another is ordinary; but for the great God to give titles to a poor wretched man is no less than wonderful. Thus doth the Lord to Job: *There is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man.* O what must he needs be in whom his Maker glories! Lo, who would have looked

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for a saint in so obscure a corner of the east, and in so dark a time, before ever the Law gave light to the world? yet even then the land of Uz yields a Job. No time, no place, can be any bar to an infinite mercy. Even this while, for aught I see, the sun shined more bright in Midian than in Goshen. God's election will be sure to find out his own any where out of hell; and, if they could be there, even there also. Amongst all those idolatrous heathen, Job is perfect and upright: his religion and integrity is so much the more glorious, because it is so ill-neighboured; as some rich diamond is set off by a dark foil. O the infinite goodness of the Almighty, that picks out some few grains out of the large chaff-heap of the world, which he reserves for the granary of a blessed immortality! *It is not of him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but of God that hath mercy.* We might well imagine that such a sprig must sprout out of the stock of faithful Abraham. What other loins were likely to yield so holy an issue? And if his Sarah must be the mother of the promised seed, yet why might he not also raise a blessed seed from Keturah? The birth doth not always follow the belly: even this second brood yields an heir of his father's faith: it is said, that *to the sons of the concubines Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away to the east,* Gen. xxv. 6. Surely this son of the concubines carries away as rich a legacy of his father's grace as ever was enjoyed by the son of the promise at home. The gifts that Abraham gave to Midian were nothing to those gifts which the God of Abraham gives to the son of Midian, who *was perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil.* I perceive the holy and wise God meant to make this man a pattern, as of patience, so of all heavenly virtues: he could not be fit for that use if he were not exquisite; and what can be wanting to that man, of whom God holily boasts that he is perfect? And now, what metal is so fit to challenge the fire of affliction as this pure gold? and who is so fit a match for the great adversary as this champion of God? Never had he been put upon so hard a combat, if God had not well known both the strength that he had given him, and the happy success of his conflict. Little doth that good man know what wager is laid on his head, but strongly encounters all his trials. The Sabeans have bereft him of his oxen, the Chaldees of his camels, the fire from heaven of his sheep, the tempest of his children, Satan of his health; and, had not his wife been left to him for his greatest cross, and his friends for his further

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tormentors, I doubt whether they had escaped. Lo, there sits the great potentate of the east, naked and forlorn in the ashes, as destitute of all comforts as full of painful boils and botches, scraping his loathsome hide with a potsherd; yet, even in that woful posture, possessing his soul in patience, maintaining his innocence, justifying his Maker, cheering himself in his Redeemer, and happily triumphing over all his miseries; and at last, made the great mirror of Divine bounty to all generations. Now must Job pray for his friendly persecutors, and is so high in favour with God, that it is made an argument of extreme wrath against Israel, that though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in the land, they should deliver none but their own souls, Ezek. xiv. 14, 20. O God, this saint could not have had this strength of invincible patience without thee: thou that rewardest it in him didst bestow it upon him: it is thy great mercy to crown thine own works in us: thy gifts are free: thou canst fortify even my weak soul with the same powers: strengthen me with the same grace, and impose what thou wilt.

XLII.—As it shall be once in glory, so it is in grace; there are degrees of it. The apostle, that said of his auditors, They have received the Holy Ghost as well as we, did not say, They have received the Holy Ghost as much as we. We know the apostles had so much as to give it to others: none besides them could do so. It is an happy thing to have any quantity of true sanctifying grace at all: every drop of water is water, and every grain of gold is gold; every measure of grace is precious. But who is there, that, when he is dry, would take up with one drop of liquor, when he might have more? or, if covetously minded, would sit down content with one dram of gold? in such cases, a little doth but draw on a desire of more. It is strange to see, that, in all other commodities, we desire a fulness: if God give us fruit of our bodies, it contents us not to have an imperfect child, but we wish it may have the full shape and proportion; and when God hath answered us in that, we do not rest in the integrity of parts, but desire that it may attain to a fulness of understanding and stature; and then, lastly, to a fulness of age: we would have full dishes, full cups, full coffers, full barns, a fulness of all things, save the best of all, which is, the Holy Ghost. Any measure of spiritual grace contents us; so as we are ready to say with Esau, *I have enough, my brother.* There is a sinful kind of contentation, wherewith many fashionable Christians suffer

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themselves to be beguiled, to the utter undoing of their souls: for hereupon they grow utterly careless to get what they think they have already: who cares to eat, that is full crammed? And by this means they live and die graceless: for, had they ever tasted how sweet the Lord is in the graces of his Holy Spirit, they could never think they had enough; and while they do think so, they are utterly uncapable of either having or desiring more. As there is a sinful, so there is an holy covetousness; which, the more it hath, the more it affects. Lord, make me thus covetous, and I cannot choose but be rich.

XLIII.—What a marvellous familiarity was this which Moses had with God, that *the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend!* Exod. xxxiii. 11: and yet more, that Moses so spake to God! What a bold and high request was that which Moses made to God; *I beseech thee shew me thy glory;* that is, as it is there interpreted, *thy face!* that face, which no man might see and live. Lo, God hath immediately before spoken to Moses, even to his face, out of the cloudy pillar: that doth not satisfy his holily-ambitious soul; but, as he heard the voice, so he must see the face of the Almighty. That cloudy pillar did sufficiently represent unto him the presence of the great God of Israel: yet still he sues for a sight of his glory. This is no pattern for flesh and blood: far be it from our thoughts to aspire so high. *Thy face, O God, will we seek;* but in thy blessed ordinances; not in thy glorious and incomprehensible essence. It is not for me as yet to presume so far as to desire to see that infinite light, which thou art; or that light, wherewith thou art clothed; or that light inaccessible, wherein thou dwellest: only now shew me the light of thy countenance, in grace; and prepare my soul for that light of glory, when I shall see as I am seen.

XLIV.—In the waters of life, the divine scriptures, there are shallows, and there are deeps: shallows, where the lamb may wade; and deeps, where the elephant may swim. If we be not wise to distinguish, we may easily miscarry: he that can wade over the ford, cannot swim through the deep; and if he mistake the passage, he drowns. What infinite mischief hath arisen to the Church of God from the presumption of ignorant and unlettered men, that have taken upon them to interpret the most obscure scriptures, and pertinaciously defended their own sense! How contrary is this to all practice, in whatsoever vocation! In

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the tailor's trade, every man can stitch a seam; but every man cannot cut out a garment: in the sailor's art, every one may be able to pull at a cable; but every one cannot guide the helm: in the physician's profession, every gossip can give some ordinary receipts upon common experience; but to find the nature of the disease, and to prescribe proper remedies from the just grounds of art, is proper to the professors of that science; and we think it absurd and dangerous to allow every ignorant mountebank to practise: in matter of law, every plain countryman knows what belongs to distraining, impounding, replevying; but to give sound counsel to a client in a point of difficulty, to draw firm conveyances, to plead effectually, and to give sound judgment in the hardest cases, is for none but barristers and benchers: and shall we think it safe, that in divinity, which is the mistress of all sciences, and in matters which may concern the eternal safety of the soul, every man should take upon him to shape his own coat, to steer his own way, to give his own dose, to put and adjudge his own case? The old word was, that artists are worthy to be trusted in their own trade. Wherefore hath God given to men skill in arts and tongues? Wherefore do the aptest wits spend their times and studies from their infancy upon these sacred employments, if men altogether inexpert in all the grounds, both of art and language, can be able to pass as sound a judgment in the depths of theological truths as they? How happy were it, if we could all learn, according to that word of the apostle, to keep ourselves within our own line! As Christians, the scriptures are ours; but to use, to enjoy; to read, to hear, to learn, to meditate, to practise; not to interpret according to our private conceit: for this faculty we must look higher: *The priest's lips are to preserve knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts*, Mal. ii. 7.

XLV.—When we see the year in his prime and pride, decked with beautiful blossoms and all goodly varieties of flowers, cheered with the music of birds, and stated in a sweet and moderate temper of heat and cold, how glad we are that we have made so good an exchange for an hard and chilling winter; and how ready we could be to wish that this pleasant and happy season might last all the year long! But herein, were our desires satisfied, we should wish to our own great disadvantage: for, if the spring were not followed with an intension of summer's heat, those fruits, whose hopes we see in the bud and flower, could

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never come to any perfection; and even that succeeding fervour, if it should continue long, would be no less prejudicial to the health and life of all creatures; and if there were not a relaxation of that vigorous heat in autumn, so as the sap returns back into the root, we could never look to see but one year's fruit. And thus also it is spiritually: if our prosperity were not intermixed with vicissitudes of crosses, and if the lively beams of grace were not sometimes interchanged with cold desertions, we should never know what belongs to spiritual life. What should we do then, but be both patient of, and thankful for, our changes, and make no account of any constancy, till we attain to the region of rest and blessedness?

XLVI.—What fools doth the devil make of those men which would fain otherwise be accounted wise! Who would think that men could be so far forsaken of their reason, as to fall down before those stocks and stones which their own hands had carved? to guide their enterprises by the fond auguries of the flying, or posture, or noise of fowls, or the inspection of the entrails of beasts? to tie the confidence of their success to certain scrawls and characters which themselves have devised? to read their own or others' fortunes in their hands or stars? to suffer themselves mocked with deceitful visions? Neither are his spiritual delusions less gross and palpable. Wise Solomon speaks of *the wickedness of folly;* Eccl. vii. 25: and we may no less truly invert it, the folly of wickedness. The fool, saith our Saviour, *builds his house upon the sand;* Matth. vii. 26: so as it may be washed away with the next waves: what other doth the foolish worldling, that builds all his hopes upon *uncertain riches,* 1 Tim. vi. 17; momentary pleasures, Heb. xi. 25; deceitful favours, Prov. xxxi. 30. *The fool,* saith Solomon, *walketh in darkness;* Eccl. ii. 14: the sinner walks in the darkness of ignorance, through the works of darkness, to the pit of darkness. *The fool,* saith the Preacher, *knows not the way into the city;* Eccl. x. 15: the worldling may perhaps hit the way through the golden gates of honour, or down to the mines of wealth, or to the flowery garden of pleasure; but the way of true peace he knows not: he no more knows the way to heaven, than if there were none. *The fool,* saith the Psalmist, *hath said in his heart, There is no God:* did not the wicked man say so, he durst not wilfully sin in the face of so mighty and dreadful an avenger. Lastly, the fool is apt to part with his patrimony for some gay toys: and how ready is

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the carnal heart to cast away the favour of God, the inheritance of heaven, the salvation of his soul, for these vain earthly trifles! Holy men are wont to pass with the world for God's fools: alas! how little do these censurers know to pass a true judgment of wisdom and folly! He that was rapt into the third heaven tells us, *that the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God stronger than men:* 1 Cor. i. 25: but this we are sure of, that wicked men are the devil's fools; and that *judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the back of fools,* Prov. xix. 29.

XLVII.—There are some things which are laudable in man, but cannot be incident into God; as, a bashful shamefacedness and holy fear: and there are some dispositions blameworthy in men, which are yet, in a right sense, holily ascribed unto God; as unchangeableness and irrepentance. Attributes and qualities receive their limitations according to their meet subjects to which they belong; with this sure rule, that whatsoever may import an infinite purity and perfection, we have reason to ascribe to our Maker; what may argue infirmity, misery, corruption, we have reason to take to ourselves. Neither is it otherwise in the condition of men: one man's virtue is another's vice; so, boldness in a woman, bashfulness in an old man, bounty in a poor man, parsimony in the great, are as foully unbeseeming, as boldness in a soldier, bashfulness in a child, bounty in the rich, parsimony in the poor, are justly commendable. It is not enough for us to know what is good in itself, but what is proper for us; else we may be blemished with that which is another's honour.

XLVIII.—It is easy to observe that there are five degrees of the digestion of our spiritual food. First, it is received into the cell of the ear; and there digested, by a careful attention: then it is conveyed into the brain; and there concocted, by due meditation: from thence it is sent down into the heart, and there digested by the affections: and from thence it is conveyed to the tongue, in conference and holy confession: and lastly, it is thence transmitted to the hand, and there receives perfect digestion in our action and performance. And, as the life and health of the body cannot be maintained, except the material food pass through all the degrees of bodily concoction; no more can the soul live and prosper in the want of any of those spiritual degrees of digestion: and as where the food is perfectly concocted, the body grows fat and vigorous; so it is with the soul, where the spiritual

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repast is thus kindly digested. Were there not failings in all these degrees, the souls of men would not be so meagre and unthriving as they are. Some there are that will not give so much as ear-room to the word of truth; such are willing recusants. Others will admit it perhaps so far, but there let it rest; these are fashionable auditors. Some others can be content to let it enter into the brain, and take up some place in their thoughts and memories; these are speculative professors. Some, but fewer, others let it down into their hearts, and there entertain it with secret liking, but hide it in their bosoms, not daring to make profession of it to the world; these are close Nicodemians. Others take it into their mouths, and busy their tongues in holy chat, yet do nothing; these are formal discoursers. But alas, how few are there whose hands speak louder than their tongues; that conscionably hear, meditate, affect, speak, do, the word of their Maker and Redeemer!

XLIX.—Men that are in the same condition speed not always alike: Barabbas was a thief, murderer, seditionary, and deserved hanging no less than the two thieves that were crucified with our Saviour; yet he is dismissed and they executed. And even of these two, as our Saviour said of the two women grinding at the mill, the one was taken, the other refused; one went before Peter to paradise, the other went before Judas into hell. The providence and election of a God may make a difference: we have no reason, in the same crime, to presume upon a contrary issue: if that gracious hand shall exempt us from the common judgment of our consorts in evil, we have cause to bless his mercy; but if his just hand shall sweep us away in the company of our wicked consociates, we have reason to thank none but ourselves for our sufferings.

L.—How sweet a thing is revenge to us, naturally! Even the very infant rejoices to see him beaten that hath angered him, and is ready with his little hand to give that stroke to the bystander, which he would have with more force returned to the offender: and how many have we known, in mortal quarrels, cheerfully bleeding out their last drop, when they have seen their enemy gasping and dying before them! This alone shows how much there is remaining in our bosom of the sting of that old serpent, who was a murderer from the beginning, delighting in death, and enjoying our torment: whereas, on the contrary, true grace is merciful, ready to forgive, apt to return good for evil, to pray for our

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persecutors, Col. iii. 13. Nothing doth more clearly evince what spirit we are of, than our disposition in wrongs received: the carnal heart breathes nothing but revenge, and is straight wringing the sword out of the hands of him that hath said, *Vengeance is mine,* Rom. xii. 19; Deut. xxxii. 35: the regenerate soul, contrarily, gives place to wrath, and *puts on the bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing, forgiving,* Col. iii. 12, 13; and will not *be overcome with evil, but overcomes evil with good,* Rom. xii. 21. We have so much of God, as we can remit injuries; so much of Satan, as we would revenge them.

LI.—It is worth observing, how nature hath taught all living creatures to be their own physicians; the same power that gave them a being hath led them to the means of their own preservation. No Indian is so savage but that he knows the use of his tobacco and contra-yerva[b]. Yea, even the brute creatures are bred with this skill: the dog, when he is stomach-sick, can go right to his proper grass; the cat, to her nep[c]; the goat, to his hemlock; the weasel, to rue; the hart, to ditany: the sick lion can cure himself with an ape; the monkey, with the spider; the bear, with an ant-heap; the panther, with man's dung; and the stork is said to have taught man the use of the clyster: to what purpose should we instance, when the case is universal? the toad hath recourse to his plaintain leaf; the tortoise to his pennyroyal: and, in short, there is none but knows his own medicine. As for the reasonable creature, in all the civilized regions of the world, we may well say now of every nation, as it was of old said of Egypt, that it is a country of physicians. There is not an housewife but hath an apothecary's shop in her garden, which affords her those receipts whereby she heals the ails of her complaining family. Only mankind is mortally soul-sick, and naturally neither knows nor seeks nor cares for remedy. O thou, that art the great Physician in heaven, first cure our insensibleness: make thou us as sick of our sins as we have made ourselves sick by sin; and then speak the word, and we shall be whole.

LII.—When I consider the precious ornaments of the high priest, the rich fabric and furniture of the tabernacle, the bountiful gifts which the princes of the tribes offered at the dedication

[b] The *contra-yerva* is a species of *birth-wort*, which grows in Jamaica, and is used as an antidote against poison or infection.—H.

[c] *Nepeta* [*Cataria*] or *cat's-mint*.—H.

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of the altar; Num. viii; I cannot but think what a mass of wealth Israel brought with them out of Egypt. These treasures grew not in the wilderness, neither did Jacob and his sons bring them out of Canaan: they were gathered in their Goshen. It was an hard bondage under which Israel was held by the latter Pharaohs: yet, as if then, instead of the furnaces of bricks, they had been labouring in the silver mines to their own advantage, they come out laden with precious metals. What should I say to this? God said, *Israel is my firstborn;* and the firstborn was to have a double portion. What was Israel, but a type of God's Church? now the Church of God may be held down with cruel tyranny, but in spite of all opposition it will thrive. And *though they have lien among the pots, yet shall they be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold,* Psalm lxviii. 13. And if the spouse of Christ shall be stripped of her outward ornaments, *yet the King's daughter is all glorious within;* rich in those heavenly endowments of grace and holiness, which shall make her dear and lovely in the eyes of her celestial Bridegroom. Shortly, the Church may be impaired in her external estate; but if the while she gathers so much the more of those better treasures, what hath she lost? *Godliness is great gain, with contentment.* If she have less of the world and more of God, what cause can she have of complaint, or her enemies of insultation?

LIII.—He that is a God of order loves both to set and keep it. For the service of his sanctuary, he appointed several offices, and in those offices several degrees. None of those might interfere with others. The Levites might not meddle with the priests' charge; nor one degree of Levites with another. The porters might not thrust in amongst the singers, though perhaps some of their voices might be more tunable; neither might the singers change places with the porters. The sons of Merari, that were to carry the boards, bars, and pillars of the tabernacle and the court, might not change with the sons of Gershon for the lighter burden of the curtains and hangings, Num. iv. 21–33; nor those of Gershon, for the more holy load of the vessels of the sanctuary, committed to the sons of Kohath, Num. iv. 15; neither might the sons of Kohath so much as go in to see the covering of those sacred utensils by Aaron and his sons, upon no less pain than death, Num. iv. 20. So punctual was God in setting every man his proper station, and holding him to it, without either neglect or

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change. And why should we think God less curious in his evangelical Church? It was the charge of him who, next under the Almighty, had the marshalling of the church of the Gentiles; *Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called*, 1 Cor. vii. 20. Perhaps there may be a better head for policy upon plebeian shoulders than the governor's: shall that man leave his rank, and thrust into the chair of government? Neither is it other in spiritual offices. It is no thinking, that the wise and holy God will be pleased with a well-meant confusion. For all our employments in the service of the Almighty, we must consult, not with our abilities, but with our vocation.

LIV.—I see too many men willing to live to no purpose, caring only to be rid of time on what terms soever; making it the only scope of their life, to live: a disposition that may well befit brute creatures, which are not capable of any other aim, save merely their own preservation; but for men, that enjoy the privilege of reason, for Christians, that pretend a title to religion, too base and unworthy. Where God hath bestowed these higher faculties, he looks for other improvements; for what a poor thing is it, only to live! a thing common to us with the most despised vermin that breeds on our own corruption; but to live for some more excellent ends is that which reason suggests and religion perfects. Here then are divers subordinations of ends, whereof one makes way for another, and all for the supreme. We labour and exercise, that we may eat; we eat, that we may live and maintain health and strength; we desire health and strength, that we may do good to ourselves and many; that we may be able to do service to God, king, and country: and therein we drive at the testimony of a good conscience, approving to God our holy desires and endeavours; and, in all these, at the glory and salvation of our souls: and lastly, in that, as the highest of all ends, at the glory of our blessed Creator and Redeemer. This is indeed to live; otherwise, we may have a being for a time upon earth, but a life I cannot call it; and when we must cease to be, we are necessarily swallowed up with the horror of either not being at all, or of being eternally miserable.

LV.—All our love is moved from some good which we apprehend in the party loved: carnal love, from beauty; worldly, from gain; spiritual, from grace; divine, from infinite goodness. It must needs be, therefore, that when the ground and motive of our love faileth the affection itself must cease. Those that are

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enamoured of a beautiful face find their passion cooled with a loathsome deformity; those that are led by the hopes of profit, like wasps, leave buzzing about the gallipot when all the honey is gone; those that could carry the rod familiarly in their hand, run from it when they see it turned to a serpent. Contrarily, when that which attracts our love is constant to itself and everlasting, the affection set upon it is permanent and eternal: if then I love God for riches, for preferment, for my own indemnity, when intervening crosses strip me of the hopes of all these, I shall be ready to say, with that distempered king of Israel, *Behold, this evil is of the Lord; what should I wait for the Lord any longer?* 2 Kings vi. 33. If my respects to my Saviour be for the loaves and fishes, my heart is carried away with those baskets of fragments; but if I can love God for his goodness' sake, this love shall outlast time, and overmatch death; Cant. viii. 6.

LVI.—What a wretched narrowness of heart is this which I find in myself, that when I may have all things I take up with nothing, and when I may be possessed of an infinite good I please myself in grasping a little thick clay! It was a large word that the Apostle said to his Corinthians: *Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;* 1 Cor. iii. 22. What shall we think they were richer than their neighbours? or is not this the condition of all those of whom he can say in the next words, *ye are Christ's?* There, there comes in all our right to this infinite wealth: of ourselves, we are beggars; in him, who is Lord of all, we are feoffed in all things; for while he saith, *All are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's,* he doth in effect say, "Christ is yours, and, in him, God is yours;" for this right is mutual. How else should all things be ours, if God were not ours; without whom all is nothing? and how should God the Father be ours, without that Son of his love, who hath said, *All things that the Father hath are mine,* John xvi. 15; *Thou, O Father, art in me, and I in thee,* John xvii. 21; *No man cometh to the Father but by me,* John xiv. 6? If then Christ be mine, all is mine; and if I have so oft received him, and so often renewed my union with him, how is he but mine? O Saviour, let me feel myself throughly possest of thee, whether the world slide or sink, I am happy.

LVII.—God will not vouchsafe to allow so much honour to wicked instruments as to make them the means of removing

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public evils. The magicians of Egypt could have power to bring some plagues upon the land, but had not the power to take them away. Certainly, there needed a greater power to give a being to the frogs, than to call them off; yet this latter they cannot do, who prevailed in the first: Moses and Aaron must be called to fetch off that judgment which the sorcerers have brought upon themselves. Neither is it otherwise still; wicked men can draw down those plagues upon a nation which only the faithful must remove; the sins of the one make work for the other's intercession. Do we therefore smart and groan under heavy calamities? we know to whom we are beholden: *Thus saith the Lord to this people, Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet, therefore he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins. When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offerings and an oblation, I will not accept them: but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence*, Jer. xiv. 10, 12. Do we desire to be freed from the present evils, and to escape an utter desolation? they are Moses and Aaron that must do it: *He said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them*, Psalm cvi. 23. When our quarrel is with Heaven, it is not our force or our policy that can save us. Every faithful man is a favourite of the King of glory, and can do more than command legions. Then is a people in some good way towards safety, when they have learned to know their friends. While we have good men's prayers to grapple with wicked men's sins, there may be hopes of recovery.

LVIII.—The aiming at a good end can be no just excuse for an unlawful act or disposition; but if contentment did consist in having much, it were a sore temptation to a man to be covetous; since that contentation is the thing wherein the heart of man is wont to place its chief felicity; neither indeed can there be any possible happiness without it. But the truth is, abundance is no whit guilty so much as of ease, much less of a full joy: how many have we known that have spent more pleased and happy hours under an house of sticks and walls of mud and roof of straw, than great potentates have done under marbles and cedar! And how many, both wise heathen and mortified Christians, have rid their hands of their cumbersome store, that they might be capable of being happy! Other creatures do naturally neglect that which

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abused reason bids us dote upon. If we had no better powers than beasts or fowls, we should not at all care for this either white or red earth; and if our graces were as great as the least of saints, we should look carelessly upon the preciousest and largest treasures that the earth can afford. Now our debauched reason, instead of stirring us up to emulate the best creatures, draws us down below the basest of them; moving us to place our happiness in those things which have neither life nor true worth, much less can give that which they have not. It is not for the generous souls of Christians to look so low as to place their contentment in any thing, whether within the bowels or upon the face of this earth; but to raise their thoughts up to the glorious region of their original and rest, *looking not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things that are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal*, 2 Cor. iv. 18.

LIX.—The holy Psalmist knew well what he said, when he called the thunder in the clouds, *The voice of the Lord;* a *voice powerful* and *full of majesty*, Psalm xxix. 4. The very heathens made this the most awful act of their Jupiter, which the Spirit of God expresses in a more divine language: *The God of glory thundereth*, verse 3. Upon this dreadful sound it is that the Psalmist calls to the *mighty ones* to *give unto the Lord glory and strength*, to *give unto the Lord the glory due to his name;* verses 1, 2; as it were advising the great commanders of the world, when they hear it thunder, to fall down on their knees, and to lift up their hands and eyes to that great God that speaks to them from heaven. No man needs to bid the stoutest heart to fear when this terrible sound strikes through his ear, which is able to drive even Neros and Caligulas into bench-holes; but this mighty voice calls for an improvement of our fear, to the glory of that Almighty power whence it proceeds. Perhaps the presumption of man will be finding out the natural causes of this fearful uproar in the clouds; but the working by means derogates nothing from the God of nature. Neither yet are all thunders natural—that whirlwind and thunder wherein God spake to Job, Job xl. 9; xxxviii. 1; that thunder and lightning wherein God spake to Moses and Israel in Mount Sinai, Exod. xix. 16; that thunder and rain wherewith God answered the prayer of Samuel in wheat-harvest, for Israel's conviction in the unseasonable suit for their king, 1 Sam. xii. 17, 18; that thundering voice from

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heaven that answered the prayer of the Son of God, for the glorifying of his name, John xii. 28, 29; the seven thunders that uttered their voices to the beloved disciple in Patmos, Rev. x. 3, 4—had nothing of ordinary nature in them. And how many have we heard and read of, that, for slighting of this great work of God, have at once heard his voice and felt his stroke! Shortly, if any heart can be unmoved at this mighty voice of God, it is stiffer than the rocks in the wilderness: for, *The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness; the Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh*, Psalm xxix. 8. For me, I tremble at the power, while I adore the mercy of that great God that speaks so loud to me. It is my comfort that he is my Father, who approves himself thus omnipotent; his love is no less infinite than his power; let the terror be to them that know him angry; let my confidence overcome my fear: *It is the Lord; let him do what he will.* All is not right with me till I have attained to tremble at him while he shineth, and to rejoice in him while he thundereth.

LX.—We talk of mighty warriors, that have done great exploits in conquering kingdoms; but the Spirit of God tells us of a greater conquest than all theirs: *Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith*, 1 John v. 4. Alas! the conquest of those great commanders was but poor and partial, of some small spots of the earth; the conquest of a regenerate Christian is universal, of the whole world. Those other conquerors, while they prevailed abroad, were yet overcome at home; and while they were the lords of nations, were no other than vassals to their own lusts: these, begin their victories at home, and enlarge their triumphs over all their spiritual enemies. The glory of those other victors was laid down with their bodies in the dust; the glory that attends these is eternal. What pity it is that the true Christian should not know his own greatness; that he may raise his thoughts accordingly, and bear himself as one that tramples the world under his feet! *For all that is in the world* is *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*, 1 John ii. 16: these he hath truly subdued in himself; not so as to bereave them of life, but of rule: if he have left them some kind of being still in him, yet he hath left them no dominion; and therefore may well style himself the lord of the world. Far, far therefore be it from him, that he should so abject and debase himself as to be a slave to his vassals; none but holy and high thoughts and

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demeanours may now beseem him; and in these spiritual regards of his inward greatness and self conquests, his word must be, "Either Cæsar or nothing."

LXI.—I see so many kind of frenzies in the world, and so many seemingly wise brains taken with them, that I much doubt whom I may be sure to account free from either the touch or at least the danger of this indisposition. How many opinions do I see raised every day that argue no less than a mere spiritual madness; such as, if they should have been but mentioned some years ago, would have been questioned out of what bedlam they had broken loose! And for dispositions, how do we see one so ragingly furious, as if he had newly torn off his chains and escaped; another, so stupidly senseless, that you may thrust pins into him up to the head, and he startles not at it! One, so dumpishly sad, as if he would freeze to death in melancholy, and hated any contentment but in sorrow; another, so apishly jocund, as if he cared for no other pastime than to play with feathers! One, so superstitiously devout, that he is ready to cringe and crouch to every stock; another, so wildly profane, that he is ready to spit God in the face! Shortly, one so censorious of others, as if he thought all men mad but himself; another, so mad, as that he thinks himself and all madmen sober and well-witted! In this store and variety of distempers, were I not sure of my own principles, I could easily misdoubt myself: now, settled on firm grounds, I can pity and bewail the woful distraction of many; and can but send them for recovery to that Divine Wisdom, who calls to them in the openings of the gates, and uttereth her words, saying, *How long, ye silly ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof,* Prov. i. 22, 23. *O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart,* viii. 5. *Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death,* viii. 34, 36.

LXII.—Man, as he consists of a double nature, flesh and spirit, so is he placed in a middle rank, betwixt an angel, which is spirit, and a beast, which is flesh; partaking of the qualities and performing the acts of both. He is angelical in his understanding, in his sensual affections bestial; and to whether of these he most inclineth and conformeth himself, that part wins more of the other, and gives a denomination to him: so as he, that was before

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half angel, half beast, if he be drowned in sensuality, hath lost the angel, and is become a beast; if he be wholly taken up with heavenly meditations, he hath quit the beast, and is improved angelical. It is hard to hold an equal temper: either he must degenerate into a beast or be advanced to an angel. Mere reason sufficiently apprehends the difference of the condition; could a beast be capable of that faculty, he would wish to be a man rather than a brute, as he is. There is not more difference betwixt a man and beast, than between an angel and a brutish man. How must I needs therefore be worse than beast, if, when I may be preferred to that happy honour, I shall rather affect to be a beast than an angel! Away then with the bestial delights of the sensual appetite; let not my soul sink in this mud; let me be wholly for those intellectual pleasures which are pure and spiritual; and let my ambition be, to come as near to the angel as this clog of my flesh will permit.

LXIII.—There is great difference in men's dispositions under affliction: some there are, dead-hearted patients, that grow mopish and stupid with too deep a sense of their sufferings; others, out of a careless jollity, are insensible even of sharp and heavy crosses. We are wont to speak of some, whose enchanted flesh is invulnerable; this is the state of those hearts which are so bewitched with worldly pleasures, that they are not to be pierced with any calamity that may befall them in their estates, children, husbands, wives, friends; so as they can say, with Solomon's drunkard, *They have stricken me, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, but I felt it not*, Prov. xxiii. 35. These are dead flesh, which do no more feel the knife than if it did not at all enter; for whom some corrosives are necessary to make them capable of smart. This disposition, though it seem to carry a face of fortitude and patience, yet is justly offensive, and not a little injurious both to God and the soul; to God, whom it endeavours to frustrate of those holy ends which he proposeth to himself in our sufferings; for wherefore doth he afflict us if he would not have us afflicted? wherefore doth the father whip the child, but that he would have him smart, and by smarting bettered? he looks for cries and tears; and the child that weeps not under the rod is held graceless: to the soul, whom it robs of the benefit of our suffering; for what use can there be of patience where there is no sense of evil? and how can patience have its perfect work where it is not? Betwixt both these extremes, if we would have our souls

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prosper, a mid-disposition must be attained; we must be so sensible of evils, that we be not stupified with them; and so resolute under our crosses, that we may be truly sensible of them; not so brawned under the rod, that we should not feel it; nor yet so tender, that we should over-feel it; not more patient under the stripe, than willing to kiss the hand that inflicts it.

LXIV.—God, as he is one, so he loves singleness and simplicity in the inward parts. As therefore he hath been pleased to give us those senses double, whereby we might let in for ourselves, as our eyes and ears, and those limbs double, whereby we might act for ourselves, as our hands and feet; so those which he would appropriate to himself, as our hearts for belief, and our tongue for confession, he hath given us single; neither did he ever ordain, or can abide, two hearts in a bosom, two tongues in one mouth. It is then the hateful style which the Spirit of God gives to an hypocrite, that he is *double minded,* James iv. 8. In the language of God's Spirit, a fool hath no heart; and a dissembler hath an heart and an heart: and, surely, as a man that hath two heads is a monster in nature, so he that hath two hearts is no less a spiritual monster to God. For the holy and wise God hath made one for one; one mind or soul for one body; and if the regenerate man have two men in one, the old man and the new, yet it is so, as that one is flesh, the other spirit: the mind then is not double, but the law of the mind is opposed to the law of the flesh, Rom. vii. 23; so as here are strivings in one heart, not the sidings of two. For surely the God of unity can neither endure multiplication nor division of hearts in one breast. If then we have one heart for God, another for mammon, we may be sure God will not own this latter: how should he, for he made it not? Yea, most justly will he disclaim both; since that which he made was but one; this, double. And as the Wise Man hath told us, that God hates nothing which he hath made; so may we truly say, God hateth whatsoever he made not; since what he made not is only evil. When I have done my best, I shall have but a weak and a faulty heart; but, Lord, let it be but a single one: *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting,* Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24.

LXV.—There is a kind of not-being in sin; for sin is not an existence of somewhat that is, but a deficiency of that rectitude which should be: it is a privation, but not without a real mischief; as blindness is but a privation of sight, but a true misery. Now,

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a privation cannot stand alone; it must have some subject to lean upon: there is no blindness, but where there is an eye; no death, but where there hath been a life. Sin therefore supposes a soul, wherein it is; and an act, whereto it cleaveth; and those acts of sin are they which the Apostle calls *the works of darkness*, Eph. v. 11; so as there is a kind of operosity in sin, in regard whereof sinners are styled, *the workers of iniquity*, Luke xiii. 27. And surely there are sins wherein there is more toil and labour than in the holiest actions: what pains and care doth the thief take in setting his match, in watching for his prey! how doth he spend the darkest and coldest nights in the execution of his plot! what fears, what flights, what hazards, what shifts are here, to avoid notice and punishment. The adulterer says that *stolen waters are sweet;* but that sweet is sauced to him with many careful thoughts, with many deadly dangers. The superstitious bigot, who is himself besotted with error, how doth he traverse sea and land to make a proselyte! what adventures doth he make, what perils doth he run, what deaths doth he challenge, to mar a soul! So as some men take more pains to go to hell than some others do to go to heaven. O the sottishness of sinners, that with a temporary misery will needs purchase an eternal! How should we think no pains sufficient for the attaining of heaven, when we see wretched men toil so much for damnation!

LXVI.—With what elegance and force doth the Holy Ghost express our Saviour's leaving of the world; which he calls his taking home again, or his receiving up! Luke ix. 51. In the former, implying that the Son of God was for the time sent out of his Father's house to these lower regions of his exile or pilgrimage, and was now readmitted into those his glorious mansions: in the latter, so intimating his triumphant ascension, that he passeth over his bitter passion. Surely he was to take death in his way; so he told his disciples in the walk to Emmaus: *Ought not Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory?* Luke xxiv. 26. He must be lifted up to the cross ere his ascension to heaven. But, as if the thought of death were swallowed up in the blessed issue of his death, here is no mention of aught but his assumption. Lo, death truly swallowed up in victory! Neither is it otherwise, proportionally, with us; wholly so it cannot be. For, as for him, death did but taste of him, could not devour him, much less put him over: it could not but yield him whole and entire the third day, without any impairing of his nature; yea, with an

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happy addition to it of a glorious immortality; and in that glorified humanity he ascended by his own power into his heaven. For us, we must be content that one part of us lie rotting for the time in the dust, while our spiritual part shall by the ministry of angels be received up to those everlasting habitations. Here is an assumption therefore, true and happy, though not, as yet, total. And why should I not therefore have my heart taken up with the assured expectation of this receiving up into my glory? Why do I not look beyond death at the eternally blessed condition of this soul of mine, which in my dissolution is thus crowned with immortality? So doth the seabeaten mariner cheer up himself with the sight of that haven which he makes for. So doth the traveller comfort himself, when after a tempestuous storm he sees the sun breaking forth in his brightness. I am dying, but, O Saviour, thou art *the resurrection and the life: he that believes in* thee, *though he be dead, yet shall he live,* John xi. 25. *Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead,* Isaiah xxvi. 19. *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; for they rest from their labours; and their works do follow them,* Rev. xiv. 13.

LXVII.—What need I be troubled, that I find in myself a fear of death? What Israelite is not ready to run away at the sight of this Goliath? This fear is natural; and so far from being evil, that it was incident into the Son of God, who *was heard in that which he feared.* Christianity serves not to destroy, but to rectify nature. Grace regulates this passion in us, and corrects the exorbitances of it; never intended to root it out. Let me therefore entertain this fear, but so as that I may master it. If I cannot avoid fear, let it be such as may be incident into a faithful man. While my fear apprehends just terror in the face of death, let my faith lay fast hold on that blessed Saviour who hath both overcome and sweetened it; on that blessed estate of glory which accompanies it: my fear shall end in joy; my death, in advantage.

LXVIII.—It is too plain, that we are fallen upon the old age of the world; the last times, and therefore nearest to the dissolution. And if time itself did not evince it, the disposition and qualities would most evidently do it: for to what a cold temper of charity are we grown! what mere ice is in these spiritual veins! The unnatural and unkindly flushings of self-love abound indeed every where: but for true Christian love, it is come to old

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David's pass; it may be covered with clothes, but it can get no heat; 1 Kings i. 1. Besides, what whimsies and fancies of dotage do we find the world possessed withal, beyond the examples of all former times! what wild and mad opinions have been lately broached, which the settled brains of better ages could never have imagined! Unto these, how extremely choleric the world is grown, in these later times, there needs no other proof than the effusion of so much blood in this present age, as many preceding centuries of years have been sparing to spill. What should I speak of the moral distempers of diseases, the confluence whereof hath made this age more wickedly miserable than all the former? for when ever was there so much profaneness, atheism, blasphemy, schism, excess, disobedience, oppression, licentiousness, as we now sigh under? Lastly, that which is the common fault of age, loquacity, is a plain evidence of the world's declinedness: for was there ever age guilty of so much tongue and pen as this last? were ever the presses so cloyed with frivolous work? every man thinks what he lists, and speaks what he thinks, and writes what he speaks, and prints what he writes. Neither would the world talk so much, did it not make account it cannot talk long. What should we do then, since we know the world truly old, and now going upon his great and fatal climacterical; but, as discreet men would carry themselves to impotent and decrepit age, bear with the infirmities of it, pity and bewail the distempers, strive against the enormities, and prepare for the dissolution?.

LXIX—There cannot be a stronger motive to awe and obedience than that which St. Peter enforceth; that God is both a Father and a Judge, 1 Peter i. 17: the one is a title of love and mercy, the other of justice. Whatever God is, he is all that; he is all love and mercy; he is all justice. He is not so a Judge, that he hath waved the title and affection of a Father; he is not so a Father, that he will remit aught of his infinite justice as a Judge. He is, he will ever be, both these in one: and we must fasten our eyes upon both these at once, and be accordingly affected unto both. He is a Father, therefore here must be a loving awe; he is a Judge, and therefore here must be an awful love and obedience. So must we lay hold upon the tender mercies of a Father, that we may rejoice continually; so must we apprehend the justice of a righteous Judge, that we do lovingly tremble. Why then should man despair? God is a Father. All

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the bowels of mortal and human love are strait to his: *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee,* saith the Lord; Isaiah xlix. 15. That which is the title of his personality in divine relation is also the title of his gracious relation to us, Father: neither can he be other than he is styled. And, contrarily, how dare man presume, since this Father is a Judge? It is for sinful flesh and blood to be partial; foolish parents may be apt to connive at the sins of their own loins or bowels, because theirs; either they will not see them, or not hate them, or not censure them, or not punish them: the infinite justice of a God cannot wink at our failings; there is no debt of our sin but must be paid in ourselves or our surety. If then we call him *Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work,* why do we not *pass the time of our sojourning here in fear?* 1 Peter i. 17.

LXX—How terrible a motion was that which was made by the two disciples, of commanding fire to come down from heaven and consume the inhospital Samaritans? Methinks I could tremble but at the imagination of so dreadful a judgment as they did not fear to sue for. Yet, if we look to the offence, it was no positive act of indignity offered to Christ, but the mere not lodging of his train; and that, not out of a rude inhumanity, but out of a religious scruple; what could they have said, if these Samaritans had pursued them with swords and staves and stones? Whom shall we hope to find free from cruelty of revenge, when even the Disciple of Love was thus overtaken? What wonder is it if natural men be transported with furious desires, when so eminent domestics and followers of our Saviour were thus faulty? Surely, nature in man is cruel; neither is there any creature under heaven so bloody to its own kind. Even bears and wolves and tigers devour not one another; and if any of them fall out in single combats for a prey, here is no public engaging for blood. Neither do they affect to enjoy each other's torment, rather entertaining one another's complaints with pity: let but a swine cry, the rest of the herd within the noise come running in to see and compassionate his pain. Only man rejoices in the misery of the same flesh and blood with himself, and loves to triumph in his revenge. While we are thus affected, we know not of what spirit we are; we may soon learn; we are even of that spirit who was *a manslayer from the beginning,* John viii. 44. As for the good Spirit, his just style is, the *preserver of men,* Job vii. 20: and the errand of

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the Son of man was, *not to destroy men's lives, but to save them*, Luke ix. 56; and his charge, to these and all other his disciples, *Be merciful, as your Father also is merciful*, Luke vi. 36. And how easily may we observe, that this very disciple, as if in way of abundant satisfaction for this rash oversight, calls more for love than all the rest of his Master's train; telling us, that *God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him*, 1 John iv. 16: and, *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love*, 1 John iv. 7, 8. Shortly then, what would not this holy disciple have given to have recalled this fiery motion? The more mercy and charity is in us, the more we have of God; the more fury and revenge, of Satan.

LXXI.—Much caution must be had in our imitation of the actions of the holiest; cautions, both in respect of the persons and of the actions: God himself, yea God clothed in flesh, though the pattern of all perfection, is not for our universal imitation: the most of their actions are for our wonder, not for our exampling. And, amongst men, how absurd were it in a peasant to imitate a king! or one of the long robe, a soldier! If Moses climb up the hill of God, Sinai, shall another Israelite say, "Moses goes up, why not I?" so he might have paid dear for his presumption; Moses was called up, the rest were limited; and if a beast touch the hill, he shall die. That act may beseem one which would be very incongruous in another: the dog fawns upon his master, and hath his back stroked; if the ass do the like, he is beaten. We are naturally apt to be carried with examples. It is one of the greatest improvements of wisdom, to know whom, in what, and how far, we may imitate. The best have their weaknesses; there is no copy without a blur *Be ye followers of me*, saith the Chosen Vessel: but how? *even as I am of Christ*, Phil. iii. 17; 1 Cor. iv. 16; 1 Cor. xi. 1. It is safe following him that cannot err.

LXXII.—God who is simply one, infinitely perfect, absolutely complete in himself, enjoys himself fully from all eternity, without any relation to the creature; but, knowing our wants and weaknesses, he hath ordained a society for our wellbeing; and therefore even in man's innocency could say, *It is not good for a man to be alone*. And why, Lord? why might not man have taken pleasure enough in the beauty and sweetness of his paradise; in contemplating thine heaven; in the command of thine

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obsequious creatures; and, above all, in the fruition of thy divine presence, in that happy integrity of his nature, without any accession of other helps? Surely, thou, who knewest well what disposition thou hadst put into him, intendedst to fit him with all meet conveniences; and thou, who madest him sociable, before he could have any society, thoughtest fit to stead him with such a society as might make his life comfortable to him. Wise Solomon observes it out of his deep experience, for *a vanity under the sun, that there is one alone, and there is not a second;* and that *two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour,* Eccl. iv. 7, 8, 9. In the plantation of the evangelical church, the apostles are not reckoned single, but by pairs, Matth. x. 2. 3, 4; and so doth their Lord send them upon the great errand of his gospel: and when he seconded that work by a commission given to his seventy disciples, he *sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come,* Luke x. 1. After this, when our Saviour had left the earth, Paul and Barnabas go together; and when they are parted, Paul and Silas, Barnabas and Mark, are sorted. Single endeavours seldom prosper; many hands make the work both quick and sure. They can be no friends to the happy estate of a family or church that labour to cause distractions: division makes certain way for ruin.

LXXIII.—Under the Law, there was difference, as of ages, so of sexes. Circumcision was appropriated to the male. In the temple, there was the court of the Jews, and without that, the court of the women; neither might that sex go beyond their bounds; and still it is so in their Jewish synagogues. But in Christ, *there is neither male nor female.* As the soul hath no sex, so God makes no difference in the acceptation of either. As it is the honour of the one sex that Christ the Son of God was a man, so it is the honour of the other sex that he was born of a woman. And if the woman be, as she is in nature, the weaker vessel, yet she is no less capable of grace than the stronger; as the thinnest glass may receive as precious liquor as the best plate. Good Anna, as well as Simeon, gave glory to their newborn Saviour, *to all that looked for redemption in Jerusalem,* Luke ii. 38. And afterwards the holy women were no less zealous attendants of Christ, both in his life and death, than the most forward disciples, Luke viii. 2, 3; yea, they followed him when his domestic followers forsook him, neither could be parted by either his cross or his grave. And they were

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the first that were honoured with the notice and message of their Saviour's blessed resurrection and ascension, John xx. 17; than which, what employment could be more noble? *The Lord gave the word*, saith the Psalmist, *great was the company of the preacheresses*[c], Psalm lxviii. 11: the word is feminine. However therefore in natural and politic respects the philosopher might have some reason to bless God that he had made him a man, and not a woman, yet in spiritual, which are the best regards, here is no inequality: so that it is the great mercy and goodness of our common Creator, that though he hath made a difference in the smallest matters, yet he makes none in the greatest; and that he so indifferently peoples heaven with both sexes, that for aught we know, the greatest saint there is of the weaker sex[d].

LXXIV.—There is nothing more easy than for a man to be courageous in a time of safety, and to defy those dangers which he neither feels nor sees. While the coast is clear, every man can be ready to say with Peter, *Though all men, yet not I: If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise*, Mark xiv. 29, 31. But when the evil hour cometh, when our enemy appears armed in the lists ready to encounter us, then to call up our spirits, and to grapple resolutely with dangers and death, it is the praise and proof of a true Christian valour. And this is that which the apostle calls *standing*, Eph. vi. 13, 14, in opposition to both falling and fleeing; falling, out of faintness, and fleeing for fear. It shall not be possible for us thus to stand, if we shall trust to our feet. In and of ourselves, the best of us are but mere cowards, neither can be able so much as to look our enemy in the face. Would we be perfect victors, we must go out of ourselves into the God of our strength. If we have made him ours, who shall, yea, who can be against us? *We can do all things through him that strengthens us*, Phil. iv. 13: all things; therefore conquer death and hell. If we be weakness, he is omnipotence. Put we on the Lord Jesus Christ by a lively faith, Rom. xiii. 14, what enemy can come within us to do us hurt? *What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee, O God: in thee, O God, have I trusted; I will not fear what* (either) *flesh* (or spirit) *can do unto me*, Psalm lvi. 3, 4. *The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation. I will call upon the*

[c] [See Hammond's Annot. on this passage.]
[d] King James's Preface Monitory.

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Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies, Psalm xviii. 2, 3.

LXXV.—It is disparagement enough that the Apostle casts upon all the visible things of this world, that *the things which are seen are* temporary, 2 Cor. iv. 18. Be they never so glorious, yet, being transitory, they cannot be worthy of our hearts. Who would care for an house of glass, if never so curiously painted and gilded? All things that are measured by time are thus brittle. Bodily substances, of what kind soever, lie open to the eye, and being seen, can be in no other than a fading condition. Even that goodly fabric of heaven, which we see and admire, must be changed, and, in a sort, dissolved, 2 Peter iii. 7, 12. How much more vanishing are all earthly glories! and by how much shorter their continuance is, so much lower must be their valuation. We account him foolish that will dote too much upon a flower, though never so beautiful, because we know it can be but a month's pleasure, and no care, no art can preserve it from withering; amongst the rest, the hemerocallis[c] is the least esteemed, because one day ends its beauty. What madness then were it in us to set our hearts upon these perishing contentments, which we must soon mutually leave; we them, they us! Eternity is that only thing which is worthy to take up the thoughts of a wise man; that being added to evil makes the evil infinitely more intolerable, and being added to good, makes the good infinitely more desirable. O Eternity! thou bottomless abyss of misery to the wicked, thou indeterminable pitch of joy to the saints of God, what soul is able to comprehend thee? what strength of understanding is able to conceive of thee? Be thou ever in my thoughts, ever before mine eyes. Be thou the scope of all my actions, of all my endeavours; and, in respect of thee, let all this visible world be to me as nothing: and since only *the things which are not seen* by the eye of sense *are eternal*, Lord, sharpen thou the eyes of my faith, that I may see those things invisible, and may, in that sight, enjoy thy blessed eternity.

LXXVI.—What is all the world to us in comparison of the bird in our bosom, our conscience? In vain shall all the world acquit and magnify us, if that secretly condemn us; and if that condemn us not, *we have confidence towards God*, 1 John iii. 21, and may bid defiance to men and devils. Now that it may not condemn us, it must be both pacified and purged: pacified, in

[c] *Hemerocallis*, the day-lily.—Hall.

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respect of the guilt of sin; purged, in respect of the corruption. For so long as there is guilt in the soul, the clamours of an accusing and condemning conscience can no more be stilled than the waters of the sea can stand still in a storm. There is then no pacification without removing the guilt of sin; no removing of guilt without remission; no remission without satisfaction; no satisfaction without a price of infinite value, answerable to the infiniteness of the justice offended: and this is nowhere to be had but in the blood of Christ, God and man. All created and finite powers are but miserable comforters, physicians of no value, to this one. And the same power that pacifieth the conscience from the guilt must also purge it from the filthiness of sin, Heb. ix. 14; 1 John i. 7; even that blood of the Son of God, who *is made unto us of God sanctification and redemption.* That faith which brings Christ home to the soul doth, by the efficacy of his blessed Spirit, purify the heart (Acts xv. 9.) from *all filthiness* both *of flesh and spirit. Being justified by* this *faith, we have peace with God.* When once the heart is quieted from the uproars of self-accusation, and cleansed from dead works, what in this world can so much concern us as to keep it so? which shall be done, if we shall give Christ the possession of our souls, and commit the keys into his only hands: so shall nothing be suffered to enter in that may disturb or defile it, if we shall settle firm resolutions in our breasts never to yield to the commission of any known, enormous sin. Failings and slips there will be in the holiest of God's saints while they carry their clay about them: for these we are allowed to fetch forth a pardon, of course, from that infinite mercy of our God, who hath set a fountain open *to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness,* Zech. xiii. 1, by the force of our daily prayers. But if, through an over-bold security and spiritual negligence, we shall suffer ourselves to be drawn away into some heinous wickedness, it must cost warm water to recover us. Neither can it, in such a case, be safe for us to suffer our eyes to sleep or our eyelids to slumber, till we have made our peace with Heaven. This done, and carefully maintained, what can make us other than happily secure? "Blessed is he whose conscience hath not condemned him, and who is not fallen from his hope in the Lord," Ecclus. xiv. 2.

LXXVII.—We cannot apprehend heaven in any notion but of excellency and glory; that as it is in itself a place of wonderful

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resplendence and majesty, so it is the palace of the most High God, wherein he exhibits his infinite magnificence; that it is the happy receptacle of all the elect of God; that it is the glorious rendezvous of the blessed angels; that we have parents, children, husband, wife, brothers, sisters, friends, whom we dearly loved, there. For such is the power of love, that it can endear any place to us where the party affected is; much more the best. If it be a loathsome gaol, our affection can make it a delightful bower. Yea, the very grave cannot keep us off: the women could say of Mary, that she was gone to the grave of Lazarus, to weep there; and the zeal of those holy clients of Christ carries them to seek their (as they supposed still dead) Saviour even in his tomb. Above all conceivable apprehensions then, wherein heaven is endeared to us, there is none comparable to that which the Apostle enforceth to us, that there *Christ sitteth at the right hand of God,* Col. iii. 1. If we have an husband, wife, child, whom we dearly love, pent up in some tower or castle afar off, whither we are not allowed to have access, how many longing eyes do we cast thither! how do we please ourselves to think, within those walls is he inclosed whom my soul loveth, and who is inclosed in my heart! But if it may be possible to have passage, though with some difficulty and danger, to the place, how gladly do we put ourselves upon the adventure! When therefore we hear and certainly know that our most dear Saviour is above, in all heavenly glory, and that the heavens must contain him till his coming again, with what full contentment of heart should we look up thither! how should we break through all these secular distractions, and be carried up by our affections, which are the wings of the soul, towards an happy fruition of him! Good old Jacob, when he heard that his darling son was yet alive in Egypt, how doth he gather up his spirits, and takes up a cheerful resolution, *Joseph my son is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die!* Gen. xlv. 28. Do we think his heart was any more in Canaan after he heard where his Joseph was? And shall we, when we hear and know where our dearest Saviour, typified by that good patriarch, is; that he is gone before to provide a place for us in the rich Goshen above; shall we be heartless in our desires towards him, and take up with earth? How many poor souls take tedious, costly, perilous voyages to that land, which only the bodily presence of our Saviour could denominate holy—their own wickedness justly styles accursed—only to see the place where

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our dear Saviour trod; where he stood, where he sat, lay, set his last footing; and find a kind of contentment in this sacred curiosity, returning yet never the holier, never the happier! How then should I be affected with the sight of that place where he is now in person, sitting gloriously at the right hand of Majesty, adored by all the powers of heaven! Let it be a covenant between me and my eyes never to look up at heaven, (as how can I look beside it?) but I shall, in the same instant, think of my blessed Saviour, sitting there in his glorified humanity, united to the incomprehensibly glorious Deity, attended and worshipped by thousand thousands of saints and angels, preparing a place for me and all his elect in those eternal mansions.

LXXVIII.—How lively doth the Spirit of God describe the heavenly affections of faithful Abraham; that *he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God!* Heb. xi. 10. What city was this but the celestial Jerusalem, the glorious seat of the great empire of heaven? The main strength of any building is in the foundation: if that be firm and sure, the fabric, well knit together, will stand; but if that be either not laid, or lie loose or unsettled, the tottering frame doth but wait upon the next wind for a ruin. The good patriarch had been used to dwell in tents, which were not capable of a foundation. It is like, he and his ancestors wanted not good houses in Chaldea, where they were formerly planted. God calls him forth of those fixed habitations in his own country, to sojourn in tabernacles or booths in a strange land: his faith carries him cheerfully along; his present fruition gives way to hope for better things. Instead of those poor sheds of sticks and skins, he looks for a city; instead of those stakes and cords, he looks for foundations; instead of men's work, he looks for the architecture of God. Alas! we men will be building castles and towers here upon earth, or in the air rather; such as either have no foundation at all, or, at the best, only a foundation in the dust: neither can they be any other while they are of man's making; for what can he make in better condition than himself? The city that is of God's building is deep and firmly grounded upon the rock of his eternal decree, and hath more foundations than one, and all of them both sure and costly. God's material house, built by Solomon, had the foundation laid with great squared stone; but *the foundations of the wall of* this *city* of God are *garnished with all manner of precious stones,* Rev. xxi. 19. *Glorious things are spoken of thee, O thou city of*

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God. Why do I set up my rest in this house of clay, which is every day falling on my head, while I have the assured expectation of so glorious a dwelling above? *For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,* 2 Cor. v. 1.

LXXIX.—God, though he be free of his entertainments, yet is curious of his guests. We know what the great housekeeper said to the sordid guest, *Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?* To his feast of glory, none can come but the pure; without this disposition, no man shall so much as see God, Heb. xii. 14; much less be entertained by him. To his feast of grace, none may come but the clean, and those who upon strict examination, have found themselves worthy. That we may be meet to sit at either of these tables, there must be a putting off, ere there can be a putting on; a putting off the old garments, ere there can be a putting on the new, Col. iii. 9, 10: the old are foul and ragged; the new, clean and holy: for if they should be worn at once, the foul and beastly under-garment would soil and defile the clean; the clean could not cleanse the foul. As it was in the Jewish law of holiness, holy flesh in the skirt of the garment could not infuse an holiness into the garment; but the touch of an unclean person might diffuse uncleanness to the garment, Hag. ii. 12, 13: thus our professed holiness and pretended graces are sure to be defiled by our secretly-maintained corruption, not our corruption sanctified by our graces; as in common experience, if the sound person come to see the infected, the infected may easily taint the sound, the sound cannot by his presence heal the infected. If ever therefore we look to be welcome to the feasts of God, we must *put off the old man with his deeds; and put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him,* Col. iii. 9, 10.

LXXX.—It is not for us to cast a disparagement upon any work of our Maker, much less upon a piece so near, so essential to us; yet with what contempt doth the Apostle seem still to mention our *flesh!* and, as if he would have it slighted for some forlorn outcast, he charges us not to *make provision for the flesh,* Rom. xiii. 14. What! shall we think the holy man was fallen out with a part of himself? Surely sometimes his language that he gives it is hard: *The flesh rebels against the spirit: I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing,* Rom. vii. 18:

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but how easy is it to observe that the *flesh* sometimes goes for the body of man, sometimes for the body of sin! as the first, it is a partner with the soul; as the latter, it is an enemy; and the worst of enemies, spiritual. No marvel then if he would not have provision made for such an enemy. In outward and bodily enmity the case and his charge is otherwise: *If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink*, Prov. xxv. 21; Rom. xii. 20: but here, *make no provision for the flesh*. What reason were there that a man should furnish and strengthen an enemy against himself? But if the *flesh* be the body of the man, it must challenge a respect; but the very name carries an intimation of baseness; at the best, it is that which is common to beasts with us: *There is one flesh*, saith the apostle, *of men; another flesh of beasts*, 1 Cor. xv. 39; both are but flesh. Alas! what is it but a clod of earth, better moulded; the clog of the soul, a rotten pile, a pack of dust, a feast of worms? But even as such, provision must be made for it, with a moderate and thrifty care, not with a solicitous; a provision for the necessities and convenience of life, not for the fulfilling of the lusts. This flesh must be fed and clad, not humoured, not pampered; so fed as to hold up nature, not inordinateness: shortly, such an hand must we hold over it, as that we may make it a good servant, not a lawless wanton.

LXXXI.—What action was ever so good, or so completely done, as to be well taken of all hands? Noah and Lot foretell of judgments from God upon the old world and Sodom, and are scoffed at: Israel would go to sacrifice to God in the wilderness, and they are idle: Moses and Aaron will be governing Israel according to God's appointment; *Ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi:* David will be dancing before the ark of the Lord; *he uncovers himself shamelessly, as one of the vain fellows*, 2 Sam. vi. 20: our Saviour is sociable; he is *a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners*, Matt. xi. 18, 19: John Baptist is solitary and austere; he doeth it by Beelzebub, the prince of devils: he rides in an homely pomp through Jerusalem; he affects a temporal kingdom; and he is no friend to Cæsar that can suffer him to live: he is, by his almighty power, risen from the dead; his disciples stole him away, while the soldiers slept: the Spirit of God descends upon the apostles in fiery and cloven tongues, and they, thus inspired, suddenly speak all languages; they *are full of new wine*, Acts ii. 13: Stephen preacheth Christ, the end of

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the Law; *he speaks blasphemous words against Moses and against God,* Acts vi. 11. And what aspersions were cast upon the primitive Christians, all histories witness. What can we hope to do or say that shall escape the censures and misinterpretations of men, when we see the Son of God could not avoid it? Let a man profess himself honestly conscionable; he is a scrupulous hypocrite: let him take but a just liberty in things merely indifferent; he is loosely profane: let him be charitably affected to both parts, though in a quarrel not fundamental; he is an odious neuter, a lukewarm Laodicean. It concerns every wise Christian to settle his heart in a resolved confidence of his own holy and just grounds; and then to go on in a constant course of his well-warranted judgment and practice, with a careless disregard of those fools' bolts which will be sure to be shot at him which way soever he goes.

LXXXII.—All God's dear and faithful ones are notably described by the apostle to be such as *love the appearing of our Lord Jesus,* 2 Tim. iv. 8; for certainly we cannot be true friends to those whose presence we do not desire and delight in. Now this appearing is either in his coming to us or our going to him: whether ever it be, that he makes his glorious return to us, for the judgment of the world, and the full redemption of his elect, or that he fetches us home to himself, for the fruition of his blessedness, in both, or either, we enjoy his appearance. If then we can only be content with either of these, but do not love them, nor wish for them, our hearts are not yet right with God. It is true, that there is some terror in the way to both these: his return to us is not without a dreadful majesty; for *the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat,* 2 Pet. iii. 10; and the glorious retiuue of his blessed angels must needs be with an astonishing magnificence: and, on the other part, our passage to him must be through the gates of death, wherein nature cannot but apprehend an horror: but the immediate issue of both these is so infinitely advantageous and happy, that the fear is easily swallowed up of the joy. Doth the daughter of Jephthah abate aught of her timbrels and dances, because she is to meet a father whose arms are bloody with victory? Judges xi. 34. Doth a loving wife entertain her returning husband otherwise than with gladness, because he comes home in a military pomp? Is the conqueror less joyful to take up his crown, because it is congratulated to him with many peals of

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ordnance? Certainly then, neither that heavenly state, wherein Christ shall return to us, nor the fears of an harmless and beneficial death, wherein we shall pass to him, either may or can hinder aught of our love to his appearing. O Saviour, come in whatever equipage or fashion thou wilt, thou canst be no other than lovely and welcome: *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!*

LXXXIII.—Suppose a man comes to me on the same errand which the prophet delivered to Hezekiah, *Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live,* 2 Kings xx. 1: with what welcome do I entertain him? Do I, with that good king, turn my face to the wall, and weep? or do I say of the messenger, as David said of Ahimaaz, *He is a good man, and brings good tidings?* 2 Sam. xviii. 27. Surely, nature urges me to the former, which cannot but hold dissolution her greatest enemy; for what can she abhor so much as a not-being? faith persuades me to the latter, telling me, that *to die is gain,* Phil. i. 21. Now, whether of these two shall prevail with me? Certainly, as each of them hath a share in me, so shall either of them act its own part in my soul. Nature shall obtain so much of me, as to fetch from me, upon the sudden apprehension of death, some thoughts of fear: faith shall straight step in, and drive away all those weak fears, and raise up my heart to a cheerful expectation of so gainful and happy a change. Nature shows me the ghastliness of death; faith shows me the transcendency of heavenly glory. Nature represents to me a rotten carcass; faith presents me with a glorious soul. Shortly, nature startles at the sight of death; faith outfaces and overcomes it. So then I, who at the first blush, could say, "O death, how bitter is thy remembrance!" Ecclus. xli. 1, can now, upon my deliberate thoughts, say, *I desire to depart, and to be with Christ,* Phil. i. 23.

LXXXIV.—In the carriage of our holy profession, God can neither abide us cowardly nor indiscreet. The same mouth that bade us, when we are persecuted in one city, flee into another, said also *He that will save his life shall lose it:* we may neither cloak cowardice with a pretended discretion, nor lose our discretion in a rash courage. He that is most skilful and most valiant may in his combat traverse his ground for an advantage, and the stoutest commander may fall flat, to avoid a cannon-shot. True Christian wisdom, and not carnal fear, is that wherein we must consult for advice, when to stand to it, and when to give back. On the one side, he dies honourably that falls in God's

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quarrel; on the other, he that flies, may fight again. Even our blessed Leader, that came purposely to give his life for the world, yet, when he found that he was laid for in Judæa, flees into Galilee. The practice of some primitive Christians, that, in an ambition of martyrdom went to seek out and challenge dangers and death, is more worthy of our wonder and applause than our imitation. It shall be my resolution to be warily thrifty in managing my life, when God offers me no just cause of hazard; and to be willingly profuse of my blood when it is called for by that Saviour, who was not sparing of shedding his most precious blood for me.

LXXXV.—He had need to be well underlaid that knows how to entertain the time and himself with his own thoughts. Company, variety of employments, or recreations, may wear out the day with the emptiest hearts; but when a man hath no society but of himself, no task to set himself upon but what arises from his own bosom; surely, if he have not a good stock of former notions, or an inward mint of new, he shall soon run out of all, and, as some forlorn bankrupt, grow weary of himself. Hereupon it is, that men of barren and unexercised hearts can no more live without company than fish out of the water; and those heremites and other votaries, which, professing only devotion, have no mental abilities to set themselves on work, are fain to tire themselves, and their unwelcome hours, with the perpetual repetitions of the same orisons, which are now grown to a tedious and heartless formality. Those contemplative spirits, that are furnished with gracious abilities, and got into acquaintance with the God of heaven, may and can lead a life, even in the closest restraint or wildest solitariness, nearest to angelical; but those which neither can have Mary's heart, nor will have Martha's hand, must needs be unprofitable to others and wearisome to themselves.

LXXXVI.—There is nothing more easy than to be a Christian at large; but the beginnings of a strict and serious Christianity are not without much difficulty; for nature affects a loose kind of liberty, which it cannot endure to have restrained; neither fares it otherwise with it than with some wild colt which at the first taking up flings and plunges, and will stand on no ground, but, after it hath been somewhile disciplined at the post is grown tractable, and quietly submits either to the saddle or the collar. The first is the worst; afterwards, that which was tolerable will prove easy, and that which was easy will be found pleasant.

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For in true practical Christianity there is a more kindly and better liberty: *Stand fast*, saith the apostle, *in that liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free*, Gal. v. 1. Lo here, a liberty of Christ's making, and therefore both just and excellent: for what other is this liberty than a freedom; as from the tyranny of the law, so from the bondage of sin? *Being then made free from sin*, saith St. Paul, *ye became the servants of righteousness*, Rom. vi. 18. Here are two masters, under one of which every soul must serve, either sin or righteousness: if we be free from one, we are bondmen to the other. We say truly, the service of God, that is of righteousness, is perfect freedom: but to be free to sin is a perfect bondage, and to serve sin is no other than a vassalage to the devil. From this bondage Christ only can free us: *If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed*, John viii. 36: and we are no Christians unless we be thus freed; and being thus freed, we shall rejoice in the pleasant fetters of our voluntary and cheerful obedience to righteousness; neither would we, for a world, return to those gyves and manacles of sin which we once held our most dear and comely ornaments; and can truly say, *Thou hast set my feet in a large room*, Psalm xxxi. 8. *I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts*, Psalm cxix. 45.

LXXXVII.—I cannot but pity and lament the condition of those Christians, who, for the hope of a little earthly dross, do willingly put themselves, for continuance, out of the pale of God's Church. What do they else, but cast themselves quite out of the Almighty's protection, who hath not bound himself to follow them out of his own walks, or to seek them out amongst Turks and infidels? Well may he say to them, as to the chief pastor of Pergamus, *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is*, Rev. ii. 13; but have they any reason to expect that he should dwell with them there, under the reign of that prince of darkness? These men put upon themselves that hard measure which the man after God's own heart complains to be put upon him by his worst enemies: *Woe is me, that I am constrained to dwell with Meshech, and to have my habitation in the tents of Kedar*, Psalm cxx. 5. That holy man could in the bitterness of his soul inveigh against his persecutors, for no other terms than these men offer to themselves: *Cursed be they before the Lord, for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord; saying, Go,*

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serve other gods, 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. I speak not of those who carry God along with them in his ordinance: all earths are alike to us, where we may freely enjoy his presence: but of those stragglers, who care not to live without God, so they may be befriended by mammon. How ill a match these poor men make for themselves, I send them to their Saviour to learn: *What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* Matt. xvi. 26. God forbid I should give their souls for lost; but I must say, they are hazarded: for herein, doubtless, they tempt God, who hath not promised to keep them in any other than their just ways; and they do, in a sort, tempt and challenge Satan to draw them on either to a love of error and impiety, or at least to a cooling of their care and love of truth. How unlike are these men to that wise merchant in the gospel! he sold all that he had to buy the pearl of great price, Matt. xiii. 45, 46; they sell the pearl to buy a little worthless merchandise. As the greatest part of their traffick stands upon exchange, so I heartily wish they would make this one exchange more—of less care of their wealth, for more care of their souls.

LXXXVIII.—Even when Joseph was a great lord in Egypt, second to none but Pharaoh, and had the command of that richest country of the world, yet then his old father Jacob thought his poor parcel of Shechem worthy to be bequeathed to him, and embraced of him, as a noble patrimony, because it was in the promised land, and the legacy of a dying father. How justly do I admire the faith both of the father and son in this donation! Jacob was now in Goshen; Shechem was in Canaan: neither was the father now in the present possession, nor were the sons in some ages to enjoy it: it was four hundred and thirty years that Israel must be a sojourner in a strange country ere they shall enter into the promised land, Exod. xii. 41: yet now, as foreseeing the future possession which his posterity should take of this spot of earth, so long after, Jacob gives Shechem to Joseph, and Joseph apprehends it as a rich blessing, as the double portion of the divided primogeniture. Infidelity is purblind, and can see nothing but that which is hard at hand: faith is quicksighted, and discerns the events of many centuries of years, yea, of ages to come. Abraham saw his Saviour's day, and rejoiced to see it, a thousand nine hundred and forty years off; and Adam, before him, almost four thousand years. As to God, all things are pre-

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sent, even future; so to those that by a lively faith partake of him. Why do I not by that faith see my Saviour returning in his heavenly magnificence, as truly as now I see the heaven whence he shall come? and my body as verily raised from the dust and become glorious, as now I see it weak and decrepit, and falling into the dust?

LXXXIX.—True knowledge causeth appetite and desire; for the will follows the understanding: whatsoever that apprehends to be good for us, the effective part inclines to it. No man can have any regard to an unknown good. If an hungry man did not know that food would refresh and nourish him, or the thirsty that drink would satisfy him, or the naked that fire would warm him, or the sick that physic would recover him, none of these would affect these succours. And according to our apprehension of the goodness and use of these helps, so is our appetite towards them; for the object of the will is a known good, either true or appearing so. And if our experience can tell us of some that can say with her in the poet, "I see and approve better things, but follow the worse;" it is not for that evil, as evil, much less as worse, can fall into the will, but that their appetite overcarries them to a misconceit of a particular good; so as, howsoever, in a generality, they do confusedly assent to the goodness of some holy act or object; yet, upon the present occasion, here and now, as the Schools[s] speaketh, their sensitive appetite hath prevailed to draw them to a persuasion that this pleasure or that profit is worthy to be embraced. Like as our first parents had a general apprehension that it was good to obey all the commands of their Creator; but when it came to the forbidden fruit, now their eye and their ear and their heart tell them it is good for them, both for pleasure and for the gain of knowledge, to taste of that forbidden tree. So then the miscarriage is not, in that they affect that which they think not to be good, but in that they think that to be good which is not: for, alas! for one true good there are many seeming, which delude the soul with a fair semblance: as a man, in a generality, esteems silver above brass; but when he meets with a rusty piece of silver, and a clear piece of brass, he chooses rather the clear brass than the silver defaced with rust. Surely it is our ignorance that is guilty of our cool neglect of our spiritual good: if we did know how sweet the Lord is, in his sure promises, in his unfailing mercies, we could

[s] [i.e. Schoolmen.]

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not but long after him, and remain unsatisfied till we find him ours: would God be pleased to shine in our hearts by the light of the true knowledge of himself, we could not have cause to complain of want of heat in our affections towards his infinite goodness. Did we but know how sweet and delectable, Christ, the Heavenly Manna is, we could not but hunger after him; and we could not hunger and not be satisfied, and, in being satisfied, blessed.

XC.—Those which we miscall goods, are but in their nature indifferent, and are either good or evil as they are affected, as they are used. Indeed, all their malignity or virtue is in the mind, in the hand of the possessor. Riches ill got, ill kept, ill spent, are but the mammon of iniquity; but if well, *the crown of the wise is their riches*, Prov. xiv. 24. How can it be amiss to have much, when he that was the richest man of the East was the holiest, Job i. 1, 3. Yea, when God himself is justly styled the possessor of heaven and earth? how can it be amiss to have little, when our Saviour says, *Blessed are ye poor?* Luke vi. 20. And if, from that divine mouth, we hear a woe to the rich, himself interprets it of them that trust in riches, Luke vi. 24; Mark x. 24; 1 Tim. vi. 17. If our riches possess us instead of our possessing them, we have changed our God, and lost ourselves; but if we have learnt to use our wealth, and not enjoy it, we may be no less gracious than rich. If a rich man have a large and humble heart and a just hand, he inherits the blessing of the poor: if a poor man have a proud heart, and a thievish hand, he carries away the woe from the rich. *Riches*, saith wise Solomon, *make themselves wings: they fly away as an eagle towards heaven*, Prov. xxiii. 5. So as we may use the matter, our souls may fly thitherward with them; if *we do good, and be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for ourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that we may lay hold on eternal life*, 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19. Let me say with Agur, *Give me neither poverty nor riches*, Prov. xxx. 8: but whethersoever God gives, I am both thankful and indifferent; so as while I am rich in estate I may be poor in spirit, and while I am poor in estate I may be rich in grace.

XCI.—Had I been in the streets of Jericho, sure, methinks, I should have justled with Zaccheus for the sycamore, to see Jesus, and should have blessed my eyes for so happy a prospect; and yet I consider that many a one saw his face on earth which shall never see his glory in heaven: and I hear the Apostle say,

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Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him so *no more*, 2 Cor. v. 16. O for the eyes of a Stephen, that *saw the heavens opened, and the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God!* Acts vii. 55, 56. That prospect did as much transcend this of Zaccheus as heaven is above earth; celestial glory, above human infirmity. And why should not the eyes of my faith behold the same object which was seen by Stephen's bodily eyes? I see thee, O Saviour, I see thee, as certainly, though not so clearly. Do thou sharpen and fortify these weak eyes of mine, that in *thy light I may see light*, Psalm xxxvi. 9.

XCII.—How gracious a word was that which God said to Israel, *I have called thee by thy name*, and *thou art mine!* Isaiah xliii. 1. He that imposed that name upon Jacob makes familiar use of it to his posterity. Neither is the case singular, but universally common to all his spiritual issue. There is not one of them whom he doth not both call by his name, and challenge for his own. *He* that *tells the number of the stars, and calls them all by their names*, Psalm cxlvii. 4, hath also a name for every of these earthly luminaries. He who brought all other living creatures unto man, to see how he would call them, and would make use of Adam's appellation, reserved the naming of man to himself, Gen. ii. 19, 20. Neither is there any one of his innumerous posterity whom he knows not by name. But it is one thing to take notice of their names, another thing to call them by their names; that, denotes his omniscience; this, his specialty of favour: none are thus graced but the true sons of Israel. As God's children do not content themselves with a confused knowledge of a Deity, but rest not till they have attained a distinct apprehension of their God, as he hath revealed himself to man, so doth God again to them: it is not enough that he knows them in a general view, as in the throng, wherein we see many faces, none distinctly; but he singles them out in a familiar kind of severalty both of knowledge and respect. As then he hath names for the several stars of heaven, Cimah, Cesil, Job ix. 9; Mazzaroth, xxxviii. 32., &c.; and for the several angels, Gabriel, Raphael, Michael, &c.; and calls them by the proper names which he hath given them; so he doth to every of his faithful ones: of one he saith, *Thou shalt call his name John*, Luke i. 13; of another, *Thou art Simon, thou shalt be called Cephas*, John i. 42: to one he says, *Zaccheus, come down*, Luke xix. 5; to another, *Cornelius*,

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thy prayers and thine alms are come up, Acts x. 3, 4. In short, there is no one of his whom he doth not both know and call by his name. What a comfort is this to a poor wretched man, to think, "Here I walk, obscure and contemptible upon earth, in a condition mean and despised of men; but the great God of heaven is pleased to take such notice of me, as even from heaven to call me by my name, and to single me out for grace and salvation; and not only mention my name from above, in the gracious offer of his ordinances, but to write it in the eternal register of heaven. What care I to be inglorious, yea, causelessly infamous with men, while I am thus honoured by the King of glory!"

XCIII.—It is the great wisdom and providence of the Almighty so to order the dispositions and inclinations of men, that they affect divers and different works and pleasures: some are for manuary trades, others for intellectual employments: one is for the land, another for the sea; one for husbandry, another for merchandise; one is for architecture, another for vestiary services; one is for fishing, another for pasturage: and in the learned trades, one is for the mistress of sciences, divinity; another for the law, whether civil or municipal; a third is for the search of the secrets of nature, and the skill and practice of physic; and each one of these divides itself into many differing varieties. Neither is it otherwise in matter of pleasures: one places his delight in following his hawk and hound; another, in the harmony of music: one makes his garden his paradise, and enjoys the flourishing of his fair tulips; another finds contentment in a choice library: one loves his bowl or his bow; another pleases himself in the patient pastime of his angle. For surely, if all men affected one and the same trade of life, or pleasure of recreation, it were not possible that they could live one by another; neither could there be any use of commerce, whereby man's life is maintained; neither could it be avoided, but that the envy of the inevitable rivality would cut each other's throats. It is good reason we should make a right use of this gracious and provident dispensation of the Almighty; and therefore that we should improve our several dispositions and faculties to the advancing of the common stock; and withal, that we should neither encroach upon each other's profession, nor be apt to censure each other's recreation.

XCIV.—He were very quicksighted that could perceive the growing of the grass or the moving of the shadow upon the dial; yet, when those are done, every eye doth easily discern them. It

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is no otherwise in the progress of grace; which how it increaseth in the soul, and by what degrees, we cannot hope to perceive; but being grown, we may see it. It is the fault of many Christians, that they depend too much upon sense, and make that the judge of their spiritual estate; being too much dejected when they do not sensibly feel the proofs of their proficiency and the present proceedings of their regeneration: why do they not as well question the growth of their stature, because they do not see every day how much they are thriven? Surely, it must needs be, that spiritual things are less perceptible than bodily: much more therefore, must we in these wait upon time for necessary conviction; and well may it suffice us, if, upon an impartial comparing of the present measure of our knowledge, faith, obedience, with the former, we can perceive ourselves any whit sensibly advanced.

XCV.—The wise Christian hath learned to value every thing according to its own worth. If we be too glad of these earthly things, it is the way to be too much afflicted with their loss; and while we have them to be transported into pride and wantonness: if we esteem them too little, it is the way to an unthankful disrespect of the Giver. Christianity carries the heart in a just equipoise: when they come, they are welcomed without too much joy; and when they go, they part without tears. We may smile at these earthly favours; not laugh out: we may like them, but we must take heed of being in love with them. For love, of what kind soever it be, is not without the power of assimilation: if we love the world, we cannot but be worldly minded; *They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh;* and *to be carnally minded is death,* Rom. viii. 5, 6: contrarily, if we love God, we are made partakers of the divine nature, and we are such as we affect. If we be Christians in earnest, certainly the inner rooms of our hearts, which are the holy of holies, are reserved for the Almighty: the outer courts may be for the common resort of lawful cares and desires; they may come and go, but our God shall have his fixed habitation here for ever.

XCVI.—Nature is sly and cunning; neither is it possible to take her without a shift: the light huswife *wipes her mouth,* and it was not she, Prov. xxx. 20. Rachel hath stolen her father's teraphim; and the custom of women is upon her: Saul reserves all the fat cattle of the Amalekites; it is for a sacrifice to the Lord thy God. Neither is it so only in excusing an evil done, but in waving a good to be done: *I am not eloquent,* saith Moses;

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send by him by whom thou shouldest send; Pharaoh will kill me: There is a lion in the way, saith the sluggard: *I have married a wife, I cannot come,* saith the sensual guest: "If I give, I shall want:" "If I make a strict profession, I shall be censured." Whereas true grace is, on the one side, downright and ingenuous in its confessions; not sparing to take shame to itself, that it may give glory to God: on the other side, resolutely constant to its holy purposes: *I and my house will serve the Lord: If I perish, I perish: I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.* It is not hard, therefore, for us to know what mistress we serve: if our care and endeavour be by witty evasions to shuffle off both evil and good, we are the vassals of nature; but if we shall with an humble penitence acknowledge our evil, and set ourselves with firm resolutions upon the tasks of good, we are under grace, in a way to glory.

XCVII.—It is good for a man not always to keep his eyes at home, but sometimes to look abroad at his neighbours, and to compare his own condition with the worse estate of others. I know I deserve no more than the meanest, no better than the worst of men: yet how many do I see and hear to lie groaning upon their sick beds, in great extremity of torment, whereas I walk up and down in a competency of health! How many do I see ready to famish, and forced to either beg or starve, whereas I eat my own bread! How many lie rotting in gaols and dungeons, or are driven to wander in unknown deserts, or amongst people whose language they understand not, whereas I enjoy home and liberty! How many are shrieking under scourges and racks, whereas I sit at ease! And if I shall cast mine eyes upon my spiritual condition, alas! how many do I see sit in darkness and in the shadow of death; whereas *the Sun of righteousness* hath risen to me *with healing in his wings!* Mal. iv. 2. How many lie in a woful bondage under sin and Satan; whereas my Saviour hath freed me from those hellish chains, and brought me to the glorious liberty of the sons of God! How many are miserably misled into the dangerous by-paths of error; whereas he hath graciously kept me in the plain and sure way of his saving truth! If we do not sometimes make these, not proud, but thankful comparisons, and look upon ourselves, not with direct beams, but by reflection upon others, we shall never be sensible enough of our own mercies.

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XCVIII.—The true Christian is in a very happy condition; for no man wille nvy him, and he can envy nobody. None will envy him; for the world cannot know how happy he is: how happy, in the favour of God; how happy, in the enjoying of that favour. Those secret delights that he finds in the presence of his God, those comfortable pledges of love and mutual interchanges of blessed interest which pass between them, are not for worldly hearts to conceive; and no man will envy an unknown happiness. On the other side, he cannot envy the world's greatest favourite under heaven, for he well knows how fickle and uncertain that man's felicity is: he sees him walking upon ice, and perceives every foot of his sliding, and threatening a fall; and hears that brittle pavement at every step crackling under him, and ready to give way to his swallowing up; and withal finds, if those pleasures of his could be constant and permanent, how poor and unsatisfying they are, and how utterly unable to yield true contentment to the soul. The Christian, therefore, while others look upon him with pity and scorn, laughs secretly to himself in his bosom, as well knowing there is none but he truly happy.

XCIX.—It was an high and honourable embassy whereon the angel Gabriel was sent down to the blessed Virgin, that she should be the mother of her Saviour: neither was that inferior of the glorious angel that brought the joyful tidings of the incarnation and birth of the Son of God to the shepherds of Bethlehem: but a far more happy errand was that which the Lord Jesus, after his resurrection, committed to the Maries; *Go to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend to my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God*, John xx. 17. Lo, he says not, "I am risen;" but, *I ascend:* as if he had forgot the earth whence he arose, and thought only on that heaven whither he was going: upon his Easter, his mind is on his Ascension-day. As there had been nothing but discomfort in death without a resurrection, so there had been little comfort in a resurrection without an ascension to glory. There is a contentment in the very act, *I ascend;* even nature is ambitious; and we do all affect to mount higher, as to come down is a death. But this height is, like the Ascendent, infinite—*I ascend to my Father:* there was the glory which he put off in his humble incarnation; there was the glory which he was now to resume and possess to all eternity. And as if nature and adoption could give a like interest, he puts both together—*my Father, and your Father:*

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my God, and your God. His mercy vouchsafes to style us *brethren;* yet the distance is unmeasurable; betwixt him, the Son of his eternal essence, and us, the naturally-wretched sons of his gracious election: yet, as if both he and we should be coheirs of the same blessedness, though not in the same measure, he says, *my Father, and your Father:* first, my Father; then, yours; and indeed therefore ours, because his: it is in him that we are elected, that we are adopted; without him, God were not only a stranger, but an enemy: it is the Son that must make us free; it is the Son that must make us sons; if we be his, the Father cannot but be ours. O the unspeakable comfort and happiness of a Christian, in respect of his bodily nature! He cannot but say, with Job, *to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister,* Job xvii. 14: in his spiritual right, God the Son hath here authorized him to say to the Almighty, *Thou art my Father;* and in nature, in regard of our frail and dying condition, willingly say, "I descend to the grave." Faith makes abundant amends in him, and can as cheerfully say, *I ascend to my Father.* And what son that is not altogether graceless would not be glad to go to his father, though it were to a meaner house than his own; and therefore is ready to say, "I will descend to my father." How much more, when his many mansions are infinitely glorious, and when all our happiness consists in his blessed presence, must we needs say, with a joy unspeakable and glorious, *I ascend to my Father!*

C.—God made man the lord of his creatures: he made him not a tyrant: he gave the creatures to man for his lawful use, not for his wanton cruelty. Man may therefore exercise his just sovereignty over the beasts of the field, and fowls of the air, and fishes of the sea; not his lawless will, to their needless destruction or torment. Had man made the creature, he could but challenge an absolute dominion over that work of his hands; but now that he is only a fellow-creature to the meanest worm, what an insolent usurpation is this, so licentiously to domineer over his fellow-dust! Yea, that great God, who gave a being to the creature, and therefore hath a full and illimited power over his own workmanship, takes no pleasure to make use of that power to the unnecessary vexation and torture of what he hath made. That all-wise and bountiful Creator, who hath put into the hands of man the subordinate dominion over all the store of these inferior elements, hath made the limit of his command, not necessity only, but convenience too: but if man shall go beyond these bounds,

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and will destroy the creature only because he will, and put it to pain because it is his pleasure; he abuseth his sovereignty to a sinful imperiousness, and shall be accountable for his cruelty. When the apostle, upon occasion of the law for not muzzling the mouth of the ox, asks, *Doth God take care for oxen?* 1 Cor. ix. 9, can we think he meant to question the regard that God hath to so useful a creature? Do we not hear the Psalmist say, *He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens that cry?* Psalm cxlvii. 9. Do we not hear our Saviour say, that not a *sparrow falls to the ground without our heavenly Father?* Matt. x. 29. And of how much more value is an ox than many thousands of sparrows! Is not the speech therefore both comparative and typical? Is the main care that God takes in that law for provision to be made for the beast? and doth he not rather, under that figure, give order for the maintenance of those spiritual oxen, that labour in the husbandry of the Almighty? Doubtless, as even the savage creatures, *the young lions, seek their meat from God;* so they find it from him in due season: *He openeth his hand, and filleth every creature with good,* Psalm civ. 21, 27, 28. Is God so careful for preserving, and shall man be so licentious in destroying them? *A righteous man,* saith Solomon, *regardeth the life of his beast,* Prov. xii. 10: he is no better therefore than a wicked man that regardeth it not. To offer violence to, and to take away the life from, our fellow-creatures, without a cause, is no less than tyranny. Surely, no other measure should a man offer to his beast than that which, if his beast, with Balaam's, could expostulate with him, he could well justify to it; no other than that man, if he had been made a beast, would have been content should have been offered by man to him; no other than he shall make account to answer to a common Creator. Justly do we smile at the niceness of the foolish Manichees, who made scruple to pull an herb or flower, and were ready to preface apologies and excuses for the reaping their corn and grinding the grain they fed upon; as if these vegetables were sensible of pain, and capable of our oppression: but surely for those creatures, which, enjoying a sensitive life, forego it with no less anguish and reluctation than ourselves, and would be as willing to live without harm as their owners, they may well challenge both such mercy and justice at our hands, as that in the usage of them we may approve ourselves to their Maker. Wherein I blush and grieve to see how far we are exceeded by Turks and

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infidels, whom mere nature hath taught more tenderness to the poor brute creatures than we have learned from the holier rules of charitable Christianity. For my part, let me rather affect and applaud the harmless humour of that miscalled saint, who, in an indiscreet humility, called every wolf his brother, and every sheep, yea, every ant, his sister; fellowing himself with every thing that had life in it as well as himself; than the tyrannical disposition of those men who take pleasure in the abuse, persecution, destruction of their fellow-creatures, upon no other quarrel than because they live.

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SUPERNUMERARIES.

I.—There is a satiety in all other, even the best things that I either have or do; I can be easily apt to complain of being wearied or cloyed with the same objects; but in the thoughts of spiritual things, methinks, I can never have enough; for, as there is infinite scope and variety of matter wherein to employ my meditations, so in each one of them there is such marvellous depth, that I should in vain hope, after all my exquisitest search, to reach unto the bottom. Yea, the more I look upon the incomprehensible Deity in any one of his glorious attributes, or any one of his omnipotent works, of creation, government, redemption, the more I long to see, and the less am I satisfied in seeing. And now I find cause to bless that unspeakable goodness, that he hath vouchsafed to give leave to his unworthy creatures to contemplate those excellent glories and those saving mysteries; and think myself happy in so gracious a liberty of exchanging these worthless thoughts of the world for the dear and precious meditations of heavenly things; and now, how justly do I fall out with my wretched self, that I have given way to secular distractions! Since my heart can be sometimes in heaven, why should it not be always there?

II.—What is this that I see? my Saviour in an agony, and an angel strengthening him! O the wonderful dispensation of the Almighty! That the eternal Son of God, who promised to send the Comforter to his followers, should need comfort! That he of whom the voice from heaven said, *This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,* should be struggling with his Father's wrath even to blood! That the Lord of life should in a languishing horror say, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death!* These, these, O Saviour, are the chastisements of our peace; which both thou wouldest suffer and thy Father would inflict. The least touch of one of those pangs would have been no less than an hell to me, the whole brunt whereof thou enduredst for my soul: what

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a wretch am I, to grudge a little pain from or for thee, who wert content to undergo such pressure of torment for me as squeezed from thee a sweat of blood; since my miserable sinfulness deserved more load than thou, in thy merciful compassion, wilt lay upon me, and thy pure nature and perfect innocence merited nothing but love and glory! In this sad case, what service is it that an angel offers to do unto thee? Lo, there appears to thee *an angel from heaven strengthening* thee, Luke xxii. 43. Still more wonder! Art not thou the God of spirits? Is it not thou that gavest being, life, motion, power, glory, to all the angels of heaven? Shall there be need of one single created spirit, to administer strength and comfort to his Creator? Were this the errand, why did not all that blessed corps of celestial spirits join their forces together in so high an employment? Where are the multitudes of that heavenly host which at thy birth sung, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace?* Luke ii. 13, 14. Where are those angels which ministered to thee after thy combat of temptations in the wilderness? Surely there was not so much use of their divine cordials in the desert as in the garden. O my God and Saviour, thus thou wouldest have it. It is thy holy will that is the rule and reason of all thine actions and events. Thou, that wouldest make use of the provision of men for thy maintenance on earth, wouldest employ thy servants the angels for the supply of thy consolations; and thou, that couldest have commanded legions of those celestial spirits, wouldest be served by one: not but that more were present, but that only one appeared: all the host of them ever invisibly attended thee, as God; but, as man, one only presents himself to thy bodily eyes: and thou, who madest thyself, for our sakes, *a little lower than the angels*, (Heb. ii. 9,) which thou madest, wouldest humble thyself to receive comfort from those hands to which thou gavest the capacity to bring it. It is no marvel, if that which was thy condescent, be our glory and happiness. I am not worthy, O God, to know what conflicts thou hast ordained for my weakness: whatever they be, thou that hast appointed thine angels to be *ministering spirits* for the behoof of them *who shall be heirs of salvation*, (Heb. i. 14,) suffer not thy servant to want the presence of those blessed emissaries of thine in any of his extremities: let them stand by his soul in his last agony; and, after a happy eluctation, convey it to thy glory.

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III.—Many a one hath stumbled dangerously at a wicked man's prosperity; and some have fallen desperately into that sin which they have seen thrive in others' hands. Those carnal hearts know no other proof of good or evil but present events, esteeming those causes holy and just which are crowned with outward success; not considering that it is one of the cunningest plots of hell to win credit to bad enterprises by the fairest issues: wherein the Devil deals with unwary men like some cheating gamester, who, having drawn in an unskilful and wealthy novice into play, suffers him to win a while at the first, that he may at the last sweep away all the stakes, and some rich manors to boot. The foolish Benjaminites, having twice won the field, begin to please themselves with a false conceit of Gibeah's honesty, and their own perpetual victories, Judges xx; but they shall soon find that this good speed is but a pitfall, to entrap them in an ensuing destruction. It is a great judgment of God to punish sinners with welfare, and to render their lewd ways prosperous; wherein, how contrary are the Almighty's thoughts to theirs! their seeming blessings are his heavy curse, and the smart of his stripes are a favour too good for them to enjoy. To judge wisely of our condition, it is to be considered, not so much how we fare, as upon what terms. If we stand right with Heaven, every cross is a blessing, and every blessing a pledge of future happiness: if we be in God's disfavour, every of his benefits is a judgment, and every judgment makes way for perdition. For me, let it be my care that my disposition may be holy and my actions righteous: let God undertake for the event.

IV.—It is no easy thing to persuade a man that he is proud: every one professes to hate that vice, yet cherishes it secretly in his bosom. For what is pride but an overweening of ourselves? and such is our natural self-love, that we can hardly be drawn to believe that in any kind we think too well of our own. Now this pride is ever so much more dangerous, as the thing which we overprize is more excellent, and as our misapprehension of it may be more diffusive. To be proud of gay clothes, which is childish, or to be proud of beauty, which is a womanish vice, hath in it more fondness than malignity, and goes no farther than the breast wherein it is conceived, finding no other entertainment in the beholders than either smiles or envy: but the pride of knowledge or holy dispositions of the soul, as it is of an higher nature,

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so it produceth commonly more perilous effects; for as it puffs up a man above measure, so it suffers not itself to be kept in within the narrow bounds of his own thoughts, but violently bursts out to the extreme prejudice of a world of men. *Only by pride cometh contention*, saith wise Solomon, Prov. xiii. 10. Even purse-pride is quarrellous, domineering over the humble neighbourhood, and raising quarrels out of trifles; but the spiritual arrogance is so much more mischievous, as the soul is beyond all earthly pelf: for when we are once come to advance and admire our own judgments, we are first apt to hug our own inventions, then to esteem them too precious to be smothered within our own closets: the world must know of how happy an issue we are delivered, and must applaud it, or abide a contestation, and expect a challenge. The fairest paradoxes cannot pass without a contradiction. It were strange if some as bold and forward wits as our own should not take up the gauntlet. Now the fray is begun; the multitude is divided; sides are taken; the world is in an uproar: from skirmishes we grow to pitched fields: the Church bleeds on both parts; and it were marvel if kingdoms could be free. But that which most notably evinceth the deceitfulness of man's heart in this behalf is, that this pride is too often lodged in those breasts which are professedly devoted to a godly and mortified lowliness: for as for those persons which are mere flesh, they are carelessly indifferent to error or truth, neither are at all moved with the success of either; but the religious mind, when it is once possessed with the conceit of some singular and important truth revealed to it, and hid from the rest of the world, is ready to say with the Samaritan lepers, *I do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and I hold* my *peace*, 2 Kings vii. 9; and therefore makes it matter of conscience to trouble the Church with a misgrounded novelty. Come we to the test. Let me ask these misguided souls, that are no less confidently persuaded of their own humility than truth, can it be any other than an height of pride for a man to think himself wiser than the whole Church of God upon earth? wiser than the whole Church of God, that hath been upon earth ever since the apostles of Christ inclusively in all successions to this present time? Can they, without much pride, think they can look deeper into the great mysteries of godliness than those blessed attendants of our Saviour, and their gracious successors, the holy martyrs, the godly and religious

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guides of God's Church in all the following ages? Had not they then the same God, the same Scriptures, the illuminations of the same Spirit? Can they imagine it less than insolent, to attribute more to their own private opinion, than to the constant judgment and practice of the whole Christian world, in all successions of generations? Can they suppose themselves, in their single capacity, though neither prophets nor prophets' sons, meet judges or questionists of those matters of faith which the general councils of the purer times have unanimously agreed upon as the main principles of Christianity? Can they think themselves privileged, by the liberty of prophesying, to coin new articles, to deface old? Surely, if the hand of pride be not in all this, I shall never desire to be acquainted with humility: so as it is too plain that a man may be exceeding proudly and not know it. This vicious habit lurks close in the soul; and, unless it discover itself by some scarce-discernible effects, which break out now and then, especially upon occasions of opposition, is rather more concealed from the owner than from the eyes of a stranger. But if ever it bewrays itself in the affectation of undue eminence, scornful under valuation of others' merits, obstinacy in opinion, sharpness of censures, and impatience of contradiction; of all these the world is commonly no less guilty, than all these are guilty of the common miseries. Lord deliver us from our pride, and our contentions will die alone.

V.—What a strange praise and privilege is that which is given to Enoch, above all those generations of men that peopled the first world; of whom the Spirit of God says, *Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him!* Gen. v. 24. Doubtless, amongst all those successive families of the sons of Seth there were many religious and well-affected souls; yet there was no one of them that had this character set upon him, that he *walked with God*, but he. Whether it were that God did in a more open and entire way reveal himself to that exemplary saint, or whether that holy man did in a more close and familiar fashion converse with the invisible Deity, the presence was certain, and the acknowledgment mutual. Neither was this walk short, for a turn and away, but constant and continual, even for the space of three hundred years, Gen. v. 22. And what! did the blessed man retire to some desert, far from all human society, that he might enjoy this heavenly company alone? Did he, this while, cast off

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all secular thoughts, and abdicate all the care of his family? Neither this nor that; for in this space, wherein he walked with his God, he both begat sons and daughters, and bred them like the children of such a father; as one that knew to make the world subordinate, not opposite to its Maker, and had learned to reconcile the use of the creature with the fruition of the Creator. What then were the steps of this walk, but pious thoughts, heavenly affections, fervent love, reverential fear, spiritual joy, holy desires, divine ravishments of spirit, strict obediences, assiduous devotions, faithful affiances, gracious engagements, firm resolutions, and effectual endeavours of good, and whatsoever might work a dearness of respect betwixt the soul and the God of spirits? O God, that which thou promisedst as a reward to those few saints of Sardis that had *not defiled their garments* (Rev. iii. 4.), thou hast beforehand fully performed to this eminent worthy of the first world: he walked with thee in white; in the white of innocence here, and in the shining robes of glory above; so thou hast told us, *He was not, for God took him.* Lo, being and good were wont to pass for convertible; but here, Enoch's not-being is his blessedness: he was not at all here, that he might be perfectly above. The best being on earth is but miserable: even Enoch's walk with God cannot exempt him from sorrows: he must cease to be, that he may begin to be happy. He was then happy, not for that he was not; a mere privation of being can be no other than the worst of evils; but for that God took him: the God with whom he walked so long upon earth takes him away from the earth to himself for eternity. Here below, though he walked with God, yet withal he conversed with sinful men, whose wickedness could not but many a time vex his righteous soul: now he is freed from all those spiritual annoyances, enjoying only the glorious presence and vision of the Divine Majesty, the blessed angels and the saints, copartners of the same immortality. There can be no doubt but that the souls of his holy predecessors, Adam, Abel, Seth, returned to the God that gave them; but had not Enoch been blessed with a peculiar conveyance to his glory, it had not been said that *God took him:* were only the spirit of Enoch yielded up in the way of an ordinary death, the man had not been taken; now whole Enoch, body and soul, is translated to an heavenly life, Ecclus. xliv. 16. His father Jared and his son Methuselah went to God in the common way of men, by a

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separation of the spirit from the flesh; but for him, *God took him,* and clothed him living with immortality. I find none but him and Elijah that were thus fetched to their heaven. It will be happy for us if we may pass in the common road to blessedness. O God, give me to walk close and constantly with thee, and what end thou pleasest: let my body pass through all the degrees of corruption, so that my soul may be immediately glorious.

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